

## POLICIES AND ASSOCIATED PROCEDURES

POLICY NUMBER:	POA061120000
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POLICY NAME:	Academic Honesty and Preventing Plagiarism
DATE APPROVED:	18 November 2008
POLICY TYPE AND CATEGORY:	(Academic) Academic and Educational
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	Pro Vice-Chancellor, Teaching and Learning
FIRST EFFECTIVE FROM:	30 July 2004

### 1.0 PURPOSE

Victoria University is a dual sector University serving about 45,000 students with a portfolio of approximately 700 courses from across the spectrum encompassing pre-Apprenticeships to PhDs. In 2005, the University sharpened its strategic focus to transform individuals and communities in its region through the power of vocational and higher education. Its capacity to make inroads towards positive economic change in western metropolitan Melbourne (and in so doing to serve as an exemplar internationally) rests on the commitment of the University to building its academic standing based on innovative courses, excellent learning experiences and good graduate outcomes. Academic misconduct degrades the value of the University's awards. All members of the academic community, students and staff alike, are responsible for the integrity and originality of their work. This policy reflects the vigilance of Victoria University in curbing the incidence of plagiarism and providing clear and fair procedures for handling allegations.

The University's values are at the heart of how we deal with the unauthorised, unacknowledged and/or the improper use of the intellectual work of other persons by staff and students.

**We value integrity, respect and transparency in personal and collaborative action**

Academic integrity underpins the University's core activities, so much of which involves the use of the intellectual output of our colleagues and predecessors as the platform for the creation of new ideas that extend the frontiers of what we know. We acknowledge the contributions of others, because not to do so can amount to theft. But also genuine learning is built on honesty; people must be able to trust what we say we know. Academic integrity, honesty, and a respect for knowledge and truth are fundamental to the work of the University in advancing the histories of individuals and communities.

### **We value diversity for its contribution to creativity and the enrichment of life**

The University aspires to distinguish itself internationally as a specialist for its work with culturally diverse and disadvantaged communities. Victoria University acknowledges with optimism the opportunities for creativity from serving a diverse spread of students, industries and community interests in Australia that mirror the growing diversity amongst citizens of the global economy. The University also recognizes the challenges that come from the pursuit of its unique mission to help redress social injustice and inequality in teaching students from this diverse range of socio-economic, educational, cultural and linguistic backgrounds and including Indigenous Australians and students with special needs. It will support staff and student development to make this a reality in learning and teaching and academic practices.

The University is aware that there are cultural differences in attitudes and practices involving the use of other persons' ideas, findings, words or (other) intellectual output and will seek to facilitate adjustments and understandings between staff and students from different cultures about the learning expectations and teaching styles in Australian universities. Our disproportionate number of 'amblers' and culturally diverse students, makes it necessary that we provide the scaffolding to enable them to develop academic, discipline specific language, but also to absorb the necessity for academic conventions of referencing, and the skills to do so effectively. To this end, Victoria University acknowledges the importance of innovative curriculum and assessment design, in enabling students to pick up the specific language and referencing skills applicable to their courses, and hence mitigating inadvertent plagiarism and the formal consequences that follow.

### **We value the pursuit of excellence in everything that we do**

The University is committed to providing a quality learning environment for students. To this end, the University supports the professional development of staff, that amongst other things will enable the use of assessment that adheres to best practice principles such that they can mitigate against academic misconduct and cultivate amongst their students a climate of mutual respect for original work. The policy aims to establish an educative framework for the shared responsibility of staff and students to prevent plagiarism, that is culturally informed and inclusive.

It is expected that staff should be vigilant in their endeavours to guard against and to detect academic misconduct when it occurs, and in these cases to apply the policy consistently. The University's approach to maintaining Academic Integrity is characterised by a commitment to continuous improvement.

### **We value knowledge and skills and critical and imaginative inquiry for their capacity to transform individuals and the community**

Our capacity to contribute to the well-being of our region, economically and socially, is contingent upon our graduates participating meaningfully as professionals in their chosen fields to build the capital of the region. Ethical and honest behaviour is integral to maintaining the academic standing of Victoria University qualifications. The University requires that all its staff and students behave according to high standards of academic honesty in any assessment, research and publications in which they engage. There is also a concomitant need for training students and staff.

## **2.0 BACKGROUND**

The Policy on Academic Honesty and Plagiarism by Staff and Students (now re-titled Academic Honesty and Preventing Plagiarism) was developed in 2004 by a Working Party that included the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Academic Board and the Chair of the Vocational Education Board. A strong motivation for the policy was to seek to have incidents of alleged plagiarism addressed locally and in an educative (as opposed to punitive) manner. The policy expired in July 2006, and the original Working Party, Chaired by Professor Greg Baxter (Discipline Committee – Chair) was revamped drawing representation from the newly formed Education and Research Board to undertake the review.

### 3.0 DEFINITIONS

#### 3.1 Academic apprenticeship

Every first year course includes a period of 'academic apprenticeship' for students in transition to tertiary study, introducing them into the conventions and language of academic writing as these apply to that unit of study. Typically, an Academic apprenticeship will provide students with practical exercises designed to:

- develop language skills in a subject area. This can involve tasks requiring students to synthesise ideas from different reading materials relevant to that subject area and to present these in written form using the appropriate referencing system;
- clarify referencing requirements;
- clarify what things should be quoted;
- teach them how to summarise;
- introduce students to the requirements and expectations arising under this policy. For example, it is expected that students will be able to access Acknowledgement/Referencing/Plagiarism workshops and/or on-line support.

The practical nature of these exercises dictates that this work is commenced at the beginning of a course, and reinforced throughout the course to nurture the development of their academic language.

#### 3.2 Academic integrity

This comprises important values that shape the work of the University in teaching, research and engagement. These are:

- **Respect** for the participatory nature of learning and the work and perspectives of others;
- **Honesty** so that commitment is given to acknowledging the work and ideas of others that is built upon;
- **Fairness** through realistic assessment expectations and clear standards that are applied fairly;
- **Trust** so that there is confidence in people and in services that enable students to achieve to the best of their abilities; and
- **Responsibility** because every person at the University has a duty to maintain academic integrity.

#### 3.3 Academic Misconduct

This involves dishonesty and premeditation in the preparation and/or presentation of assessable work, usually gaining an unjust academic advantage for the student(s) to which the student(s) are not entitled and/or which may result in the diminution of academic integrity, thereby bringing the University into disrepute. The following are examples of practices that are prohibited:

- 3.3.1 Falsification of results from experiments, surveys or other research methods and fabrication of data.
- 3.3.2 Ghostwriting, where a second or third party authors an assignment or undertakes an assessment, in whole or in part, that is presented as the student's own.
- 3.3.3 Recycling work which has previously been done as part of studies in another subject and presenting it for assessment again as if it was done expressly for the particular unit of study currently being taken, without the permission of the teacher(s).
- 3.3.4 Making contact with another person during an examination (including take home exams) or any other form of assessment contrary to instructions.

#### 3.4 Acknowledgement

When another's ideas are used they should be acknowledged so that work is not misrepresented as original. There are two levels of Acknowledgement:

**3.4.1 Attribution**

This is where the majority of someone else's intellectual output (ideas, writings, creative thinking, designs etc) in a modified form, are presented in the author's own words. For example, paraphrasing or summarising. In these instances it is appropriate to name the 'owner' (in the body of the writing) without enclosing the sentence(s) or part of a sentence in quotation marks. The original source of attributable work must be recorded in the Bibliography/Reference List.

**3.4.2 Citation (also known as in-text referencing)**

This is where a body of text that has been copied exactly from the original . The source is identified using quotation marks text and/or indenting. Consequently the text is clearly distinguished as work originating from another source. The original source of work that is cited must be recorded in a Reference List and/or Bibliography.

**3.5 Bibliography**

This is a reference list that includes all the texts and web sites that have been read for understanding, as well as those that have been cited in a piece of work.

**3.6 Central Database of Plagiarism, Academic Misconduct and Disciplinary Offences**

The University's central register of cases of student plagiarism is used to assist in the detection of students committing multiple offences in different courses. The Register is maintained by the Department of Student Services.

**3.7 Collaboration**

This is work that is undertaken jointly by two or more students with the knowledge, encouragement and consent of the teacher.

**3.8 Collusion**

This occurs when without the knowledge, or consent of the teacher, a student presents a piece of work for assessment that is produced with the assistance of another person(s), with the intention of getting a mark higher than he/she would have otherwise got. The term collusion includes the person who knowingly provides or allows access to his or her work as well as the person who presents such work.

**3.9 Common Knowledge**

This is information that is readily available and known to most people and free to be used without acknowledgement.

**3.10 Paraphrasing**

This involves a student / author using someone else's ideas but expressing them in his/her own words. As another person's intellectual output (ideas) are being used, they must be acknowledged, for example by footnote.

**3.11 Plagiarism**

The practice that involves use of another person's intellectual output and presenting it (without appropriate acknowledgement) as one's own.

These are examples of Plagiarism:

- 3.11.1** Word-for-word copying of sentences/paragraphs in an assignment without acknowledgement or with insufficient or improper acknowledgement;
- 3.11.2** Downloading essays or assignments from the web and presenting these for assessment;
- 3.11.3** Presenting another student's work or research data as the student's work;
- 3.11.4** Copying out parts of any text without acknowledging the source(s). This may be written text, structures within texts, diagrams, formulae, sound files, still photographs, audio-visual material (sound and image files), graphics/animations/multimedia objects, other computer based material, mathematical proofs, art objects, products and others. This can be done as verbatim copying or paraphrasing.

- 3.11.5** The use of someone else's concepts, experimental results, experimental conclusions or conclusions drawn from analysing evidence or arguments without acknowledging the originator of the idea(s) or conclusion(s).

**3.12 Procedural Fairness**

This enables a fair hearing of a complaint. The principles of procedural fairness that decision makers acting under this policy will follow, include:

- The right to a fair hearing;
- The right to attend hearings with an advocate, representative, friend or support person if required;
- All parties shall have the right to be heard before a decision is made, including the right to respond to any statements or evidence that may prejudice their case.
- The disclosure of all submissions to all parties prior to the hearing whereby students are able to have full knowledge of the nature and substance of all allegations;
- The decision maker/s shall not be biased or appear to be biased (by a reasonable and informed bystander) nor have a vested interest or personal involvement in the matter of the complaint.
- A final decision that is based solely on the relevant evidence.

**3.13 Reference List**

This contains the full details of all the in-text citations arranged alphabetically and is located at the end of the work. There are more than one referencing systems for arranging your reference list.

**3.14 Student Advisor**

A staff member of the Student Services Department who provides information, advice and referral services to students on key University issues and processes which impact on them, and where requested by students, represents them at hearings related to academic progress, grievances and discipline.

**4.0 KEY WORDS**

Academic Integrity, Academic misconduct, Collusion, Falsification, Plagiarism.

**5.0 POLICY**

Academic integrity is fundamental to the University's functions of teaching, learning and research. Plagiarism and other related forms of misconduct as set out under this policy diminish the quality of learning and are prohibited. The University expects high standards of behaviour in all its teaching, assessment, research and publications and accordingly it is committed to the transparent and fully acknowledged use of sources in academic work undertaken by its staff and students.

**5.1 SCOPE**

This policy applies to:

- all members of the University undertaking University assessment in any award or non-award course of the University; on-campus (both on-shore and off-shore) and off-campus (when studying on-line, flexed, as an apprentice/ trainee, in the VET in Schools programs or in industry programs);
- all members of the University engaged in any scholarly or academic work published within or outside the University, during or before employment or study at the University, where plagiarism by a member of the University may reflect negatively on the University's standing;
- persons who have obtained an award at the University but that after their completion have been found to have committed academic misconduct in completing that award.

## 5.2 POLICY PRINCIPLES

### 5.2.1 NURTURING GOOD ACADEMIC PRACTICE AND LANGUAGE SKILLS

Victoria University is committed to transforming the lives of people in the west of Melbourne and beyond. An important factor to the access and success of students from non-traditional backgrounds in tertiary education is the development of sophisticated language and writing skills. Victoria University does not leave these important learning processes to chance and will provide training in acceptable processes for borrowing another person's words but also adapting personal points of view to specialised topics and supporting an argument through greater use of research and evidence.

### 5.2.2 ASSESSMENT BEST PRACTICE

Assessments are designed and implemented in ways that discourage plagiarism and that reflect best practice. Strategies for improving the reliability of assessment and improving consistency in judgments about plagiarism/collusion should augment design.

### 5.2.3 COMPREHENSIVE DETECTION

Teaching staff carry the major responsibility for ensuring that breaches of academic integrity are detected and actioned. Any other member of staff who has reason to believe that a student has committed an offence as covered under this policy will write to the Pro Vice-Chancellor, Students, for referral to the relevant Head of School/ Department, or where it concerns a PhD or Masters, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research and Region.

In cases where academic misconduct or dishonesty is detected after the student has graduated in the course where the alleged offence has taken place, and where that is such as to have compromised the assessment process, the report, whether initiated internally or externally, is made to the Pro Vice-Chancellor, Students, for referral as above.

Allegations from outside the University concerning staff must be referred to the Vice-Chancellor. Where the allegation originates from within the University, the matter is referred to the relevant senior officer.

### 5.2.4 A CLEAR AND TRANSPARENT FRAMEWORK FOR SOUND DECISION MAKING

It is important to recognize that not all breaches of academic integrity are identical and that there are varying degrees of culpability. For example, Plagiarism can occur as a result of a deficiency in language skills, poor academic practice or knowingly when the student seeks to obtain an unfair advantage in an assessment, deceiving the teacher in the process. In order to improve consistency and transparency in decision making when establishing the seriousness of an incident of plagiarism, there is a framework for classifying incidents according to their seriousness according to prescribed indicators.

#### 5.2.4.1 Categories of Plagiarism

**Level 1 Plagiarism** is inadequate or misleading citing, referencing or paraphrasing, arising mainly from a student's limited knowledge about plagiarism, or how to conform to academic conventions, or from carelessness or neglect rather than intention to deceive. Level 1 Plagiarism is not considered academic misconduct.

**Level 2 Plagiarism** is more serious than Level 1 Plagiarism and includes inappropriate or fraudulent acts or work arising from a student's ignorance of academic integrity or academic conventions (where adequate knowledge would have been expected), and where intention to deceive an assessor or cheat by

way of plagiarism is apparent, but where the overall effect or consequence of the plagiarism does not significantly compromise the assessment process. Level 2 Plagiarism is considered academic misconduct.

**Level 3 Plagiarism** is more serious than Level 2 Plagiarism and includes copied or appropriated work arising from the clear intention to deceive an assessor, or premeditated cheating by way of plagiarism. The effect of the plagiarism is to seriously compromise the assessment process. Level 3 Plagiarism is considered academic misconduct.

#### **5.2.4.2 Criteria for Determining the Seriousness of the Offence**

In determining the seriousness of an act of plagiarism, the following should be considered:

- i. What proportion of the work features plagiarized material or information that is the outcome of other academically dishonest practices? Less than 10% is generally thought of as minor, unless that includes the key element of foundation for that work.
- ii. Has there been some attempt, albeit inadequate, at referencing?
- iii. What is the weight of the assessment?
- iv. The academic level/experience of the student. All things being equal, a student new to study should not be treated in the same way as a postgraduate student in cases of alleged academic misconduct.
- v. Cultural factors. The student is an overseas student who might have been taught to copy from authorities and consequently is having difficulty adjusting to new academic conventions. This would indicate the need for further teaching.
- vi. The level of information that was provided to the student on how to acknowledge extracts and quotations and construct arguments.
- vii. Has the student actively used the available support and advice for dealing with referring and citation issues and sound academic practice? Such actions would indicate both that they are pursuing their studies in good faith, and that they are genuinely less than totally clear about what constitutes good academic practice. It is reasonable to assume that instances of plagiarism in the work of such students are more likely to be accidental.

#### **5.2.4.3 Considerations to take into account when determining Remedy and/or Penalty**

The University accepts that there can be mitigating and aggravating factors associated with the commission of plagiarism or other forms of academic misconduct. So as to ensure that any action taken is proportionate to the behaviour of the student, decision makers must take into account a range of circumstances that may apply to the case, prior to determining penalties/remedies.

#### **5.2.4.4 Penalties, Remedies and who can impose them**

The University seeks to manage incidents of plagiarism effectively and fairly. Central to this is establishing the basis for a consistent approach to how we deal with these cases, irrespective of where they occur. Penalties, remedies and staff who may impose them, are prescribed in the 'Schedule of Penalties and Remedies' found at attachment 1 to the policy.

**5.2.4.5      Central Database of Plagiarism, Academic Misconduct and Disciplinary Offences**

The University keeps a central register of cases of student plagiarism ("the Central Database of Plagiarism, Academic Misconduct and Disciplinary Offences"). The register is held and maintained by the Department of Student Services. Findings are recorded on the database and are used to inform decisions on penalties/remedies.

**5.2.4.6      Monitoring and reporting on application**

Each Faculty, TAFE School and the Office of Postgraduate Research will keep a record of all reported allegations of plagiarism. A report is to be submitted to the Education and Research Board at its meeting in March each year on the operation of the policy.

**5.2.5      CONSISTENT AND FAIR HANDLING OF INCIDENTS UNDERPINNED BY THE OBJECTIVE OF DETERRENCE**

The University's approach to handling cases of plagiarism or other academic misconduct arising under this policy will be characterised by the adherence to procedural fairness responsiveness and confidentiality so as to achieve a sound and fair resolution.

**5.2.6      MAINTAINING ACADEMIC INTEGRITY – A COLLECTIVE RESPONSIBILITY**

Maintaining academic integrity requires a collective approach by the university, teaching staff and students. Each has a role to play in meeting its rights and responsibilities. (See Procedures for Helping Students Avoid Plagiarism)

**6.0      PROCEDURES**

The policy is accompanied by the following procedures:

- 6.1      Procedures for Helping Students Avoid Plagiarism
- 6.2      Procedures for the Management of Plagiarism (and other related forms of academic misconduct) by Staff;
- 6.3      Procedures for the Management of Plagiarism (and other related forms of academic misconduct) by Research Students;
- 6.4      Procedures for the Management of Plagiarism (and other related forms of academic misconduct) by Students *other than Research Students*.

**7.0      CONGRUENCE WITH LEGISLATION AND RELATED POLICIES**

- 7.1      The Australian Universities Teaching Committee's *Minimising Plagiarism* (endorsed by the Academic Board and the Vocational Education Board as a guide for staff);
- 7.2      SLS information sheet: *How to Support Students to Value Academic Honesty and Avoid Plagiarism*;
- 7.3      Code of Conduct for Research;
- 7.4      Code of Practice for Post Graduate Research and Supervision;
- 7.5      Statute 2.7 – Discipline;
- 7.6      Regulation 2.7 – Discipline;
- 7.7      Statute 3.1.3 – The Vice-Chancellor;
- 7.8      Statute 6.3.1 – Assessment;
- 7.9      Learning and Teaching Policy;
- 7.10     Student Assessment Policy;
- 7.11     Student Feedback and Complaints Policy; and
- 7.12     Staff Disciplinary Action Procedures.

## **8.0 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

The following resources were used in the preparation of this policy:

- Academic Integrity and Plagiarism in the Classroom – Virtual Academic Integrity Laboratory;
- Adelaide University – Plagiarism;
- Australian National University – Academic Honesty in Learning and Teaching;
- Chanock, K. "Considerations relevant to plagiarism policy and practices to support it";
- Curtin University – Plagiarism;
- Edith Cowan University – Policies and Procedures: Academic Misconduct (including Plagiarism);
- Ensuring Awareness of Plagiarism Policy – AUQA Good Practice: University of New England;
- Macquarie University – 'What is Plagiarism?';
- McGowan, U. Plagiarism detection and prevention: Are we putting the cart before the horse?
- McGowan, U. Plagiarism detection and prevention. Pedagogical implications for lecturers of first year university students;
- Monash University – Plagiarism and Cheating Policy;
- RMIT - Plagiarism Policy;
- The University of Melbourne Policy on Academic Honesty;
- The University of Sydney Academic Board Resolutions: Academic Honesty in Coursework;
- University of Canberra – Procedures for dealing with plagiarism in assessment other than examinations;
- University of Texas at El Paso – Department of Philosophy, Academic Dishonesty at UTEP;
- University of Newcastle – Policy on Student Academic Integrity;
- University of Queensland – Academic Integrity and Plagiarism;
- University of South Australia – Plagiarism On-line Resource;
- University of Western Sydney: Student Academic Misconduct Policy;
- University of Wollongong – Acknowledgement Practice/Plagiarism;
- Yeo, S. Managing Student Plagiarism – critical first-stage decision-making.

## **9.0 CONSULTATION**

This policy was developed by a Working Party comprising of representatives from relevant stakeholders. It has been the subject of discussion since late 2005. However the policy has also been issued to:

- i. VCAC (Scholarship and Skills), 7 August 2006 (also resulting in feedback from Mr C King);
- ii. the Quality, Teaching and Learning Committee, 25 August 2006;
- iii. Education and Research Policy and Planning Committee, 23 August 2006;
- iv. TAFE Associate Directors (resulting in feedback from the School of FEAES on 24 August 2006);
- v. FBOS (resulting in feedback from the Faculty of Arts, Education and Human Development on 15 August 2006 and the Faculty of Business and Law on 29 August 2006);
- vi. the University community (resulting in feedback from the Associate Dean – Learning and Teaching, Faculty of Arts, Education and Human Development on 13 August 2006, the School of Management, Faculty of Business and Law, August 2006, the Pro Vice-Chancellor, Teaching and Learning, Ms B McLennan, August 2006);
- vii. Ursula McGowan, Deputy Director, Centre for Learning and Professional Development, University of Adelaide;
- viii. Victoria University International, September 2006;
- ix. Student Learning Services, September 2006;
- x. Postgraduate Research Committee, 16 August 2006.

## **10.0 REVIEW**

The policy will be reviewed no later than October 2009.

## **11.0 ACCOUNTABILITIES**

### **11.1 RESPONSIBILITY**

The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning) is responsible for overseeing the implementation of this policy, in conjunction with:

- Associate Deans, Teaching and Learning;
- Associate Directors (or nominees);
- Director, Postgraduate Research;
- Course Co-ordinators/Program Managers;
- Heads of School/Heads of Department.

Every member of the University shares the responsibility to know and to respect the rules concerning plagiarism and other related forms of misconduct as set out under this policy so that we can maintain the Academic Integrity of the University.

### **11.2 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**

A plagiarism policy is currently in place; this is a major review of the current policy. It is proposed to have the policy fully operational for student and staff information and orientation for semester 1, 2007.

### **11.3 TRAINING PLAN**

Teaching and Learning Support will provide two main support activities: informing teaching staff with responsibility for implementation of the policy including working on the specific requirements relevant to the procedures i.e. detection systems; and providing teaching and learning support materials available through the TLS website.

The Quality Teaching and Innovation Unit in the Staff College will address queries regarding the interpretation of policies and procedures. The Staff College will continue the roll-out of Teaching and Learning Policies in 2007.

### **11.4 COMPLIANCE**

Compliance with this policy is mandatory for both staff and students.

### **11.5 EFFECTIVENESS OF THIS POLICY**

#### **Performance Indicators**

The effectiveness of the policy will be monitored by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning). The Associate Deans (Teaching and Learning), the Associate Directors (or nominees) the Director, Postgraduate Research will provide an annual report to the Education and Research Board on the operation of the policy. The reports will deal with the following:

- i. the number and nature of incidents arising under this policy;
- ii. the resolutions invoked;
- iii. the number of appeals to the Discipline Committee;
- iv. recommendations for changes to the policy;
- v. any other matters relevant to the University's approach for Academic Honesty and Preventing Plagiarism.

## **12.0 POLICY ADVISOR**

Senior Policy Co-ordinator

## 13.0 APPENDICES

- [1] Schedule of Penalties and Remedies and Who Can Impose Them;
- [2] Assessment Declaration;
- [3] Plagiarism Checklist;
- [4] Letter 1 - Notification by the Higher Education Head of School or TAFE Head of Department of a scheduled hearing;
- [5] Letter 2: Notification by the Higher Education Head of School/TAFE Head of Department of the hearing outcome;
- [6] Letter 3: Notification by the Executive Dean/Associate Director of the review outcome.
- [7] Flow Chart – Management of Allegations of Plagiarism by Postgraduate Research Students;
- [8] Flow Chart – Management of Allegations of Plagiarism by Students (other than Postgraduate Research Students); and
- [9] Flow Chart – Management of Plagiarism by Staff.
- [10] Strategies for Minimising Plagiarism

## ASSOCIATED PROCEDURE 6.1

TITLE:

PROCEDURES FOR HELPING STUDENTS AVOID  
PLAGIARISM

DATE APPROVED

(if different to the policy):

MANAGER(S) RESPONSIBLE  
FOR IMPLEMENTATION,  
COMPLIANCE AND REVIEW:

Pro Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning)

### 1.0 PROCEDURES ADVISOR

Director, Centre of Staff Learning and Educational Development

### 2.0 THE PROCEDURES

The VU approach to plagiarism is educative. The University wishes to foster a culture of learning informed by values of integrity and honesty and all staff and students are encouraged to consider their rights and responsibilities as set out below.

#### 2.1 Prevention and Education

All students will be provided with, or have access to, information about Academic Integrity, plagiarism. In particular, this should include descriptions and subject specific examples of what is unacceptable and guidelines on how to avoid plagiarism. Having regard to the range of students and courses at Victoria University, there should be careful consideration given to the most effective means for the communication of this information.

Course Co-ordinators/Program Managers should disseminate this information by:

- ensuring that each course guide or handbook contains information on the requirements for citation, together with the preferred referencing style, where appropriate;
- making material available to students at the commencement of their studies (including the Policy or an explanation of the policy) and clearly explaining expectations and requirements;
- providing information about plagiarism, including consequences in orientation or induction programs;
- arranging academic integrity courses and workshops for students at key times of the year on specific and relevant subject matter for the cohort;
- encouraging best practice in Assessment design as outlined under section 5.2.2 of the policy;
- ensuring the use of the Assessment Declaration form for the submission of all major assessments (Attachment 2 to the Policy).

Heads of Higher Education Schools and TAFE Heads of Departments, shall encourage teaching staff to design/develop curriculum in ways that make clear the key language requirements specific to that course and for increasing cultural competence.

## 2.2 Assessment design

Assessments are designed and implemented in ways that discourage plagiarism and that reflect best practice. For example:

- i. making it clear to students when it is appropriate to collaborate in the preparation and submission of assignments and when individual work is required;
- ii. updating the curriculum to reflect contemporary disciplinary knowledge and changing assessment items from semester to semester;
- iii. wherever possible, requiring (and rewarding) students to relate their personal experiences as a valuable component of information that is part of assessable work;
- iv. using engaging, specific and unique assessment exercises, in order to prevent assignments on generic topics being submitted;
- v. providing opportunities for students to defend or justify their work, for example, through the use of poster sessions or tutorials;
- vi. aligning learning objectives to assessment tasks;
- vii. accommodating for the needs of NESB/CALD students;
- viii. modelling correct attribution processes in the classroom and allowing students to practise these via formative assessment tasks;
- ix. preparing subject material at an appropriate standard, the understanding of which is tested through a realistic moderation regime. Preferably this is co-ordinated across the course to prevent undue workload pressure on students;
- x. providing marking criteria.

Strategies for improving the reliability of assessment and improving consistency in judgments about plagiarism/collusion should augment design and include:

- i. as few examiners as is reasonable are used in marking large numbers of student assessment pieces;
- ii. each incident of suspected plagiarism is reviewed and judged by at least two teachers/lecturers;
- iii. judgements about different incidents in Schools are made by as few staff as possible.

## 2.3 Maintaining academic integrity – A collective responsibility

Maintaining academic integrity requires a collective approach by the University, teaching staff and students.

### Victoria University

*The University is responsible for:*

- engaging staff and students on the value of academic integrity to the core activities of the university;
- providing adequate language support;
- developing front line Learning and Teaching policies characterised by the recognition of many of our student's cultural and linguistic diversity and the first in family experience, to enable Victoria University's transformational role to the lives of individuals and communities. With respect to plagiarism, the University has policies (and takes reasonable steps to make staff aware of their existence) such as to provide clear guidance about how allegations of plagiarism by staff and students are dealt with, including prescribing a range of penalties that are available in proven cases;
- informing and educating staff and students on strategies of how to avoid plagiarism;
- providing systems and facilities (e.g. Turnitin) to both staff and students for educative and detection purposes.

*The University has a right to:*

- expect that students would avoid any action or behaviour that may give them an academic advantage to which they are not entitled or which will diminish the University's academic standing.
- expect that staff will be aware of and observe the relevant policies and associated regulations.

**Teaching Staff**

In order to maintain high standards of academic integrity, it is the obligation of every member of the University to know and to respect the rules concerning plagiarism and other related forms of misconduct as set out under the policy and to seek to foster a learning environment that encourages the development of academic skills that are appropriate to that Unit of Study.

*Teaching Staff are responsible for:*

- giving expression to the Academic Apprenticeship by engaging students at the beginning of each teaching period about the University's conventions, policies and procedures regarding acknowledgement, the unacceptability of academic misconduct, including plagiarism, and following this up with work or tasks/activities that reinforce this learning at regular intervals throughout the semester (and throughout the course of study). This should take into account the diverse educational and cultural backgrounds of students and focus on plagiarism as it specifically relates to the course;
- ensuring that assessments are designed and implemented in ways that discourage plagiarism and that reflect best practice principles as articulated under 5.2.2;
- educating and mentoring junior and peer colleagues (both staff and students) about academically honest behaviour;
- providing examples of good academic practice by appropriately acknowledging the work of others in their teaching and research;
- being reasonably available to students before and after work has been assessed to provide resources and feedback as appropriate;
- requiring students to use the 'Assessment Declaration Form' when submitting major work for assessment declaring that the work is original and cited works have been acknowledged;
- taking regular and committed steps to detecting plagiarism and collusion.

*Teaching Staff have a right to:*

- expect institutional support for the prevention, detection and elimination of plagiarism and other academic misconduct;
- expect that students will act upon advice/feedback provided to them in the course of their completing assessments;
- expect that students will attend educative lectures or programs where they are recommended to do so, on language support, referencing, plagiarism, academic integrity etc.

**Students**

*Students are responsible for:*

- understanding and respecting the University's policies and procedures regarding plagiarism, collusion, and other forms of academic misconduct and as such should only submit work for correction or academic credit that is their own or that properly acknowledges the ideas, interpretations, words or creative works of others;
- avoiding the lending or making accessible original work to others;
- being clear about the appropriate referencing rules that are applicable to their field of study;
- refusing to be a party to another student's efforts to undermine the academic integrity of the University.

*"The current official version of this policy is maintained on the Victoria University Central Policy Register and downloading and printing of this policy will produce an uncontrolled copy which may not be current."*

- seeking assistance with their learning and assessment tasks if they are unsure of appropriate forms of acknowledgement.

*Students have a right to:*

- be provided with guidelines on academic referencing styles required in each Unit of Study and guidelines relating to group work;
- expect a consistent application of the policy;
- respond to allegations of plagiarism and other related forms of misconduct as set out under this policy, and in so doing may call upon appropriate representation at any hearing, including a Student Advisor;
- a fair and equitable hearing and the provision of an appeal mechanism for findings made against them by the designated decision maker in relation to plagiarism and other related forms of misconduct as set out under this policy.

#### **2.4 Monitoring and reporting on application**

Each Faculty, TAFE School and the Office of Postgraduate Research in conjunction with the Department of Student Services, will keep a record of all reported allegations of plagiarism brought to the attention of any of the following, Course Co-ordinator/Program Manager, OR Head of Department/Head of School, OR Associate Director/Executive Dean OR Chair, Postgraduate Research Committee. The relevant Associate Dean for Learning and Teaching in each Faculty, Associate Director (or nominee) in each TAFE School OR the Director of Postgraduate Research (whichever is applicable) will review the procedural aspects of these records to ensure that they have been dealt with according to the appropriate University Regulations, Policies and Procedures. The staff member is not required to pass judgment on the issue of plagiarism, only to ensure that the appropriate procedures have been followed.

This process will culminate in an annual report to the Education and Research Board at its meeting in March each year on the operation of the policy.

#### **3.0 APPENDICES (If required)**

Learner and Teacher resources are available on the TLS website.

## ASSOCIATED PROCEDURE 6.2

**TITLE:** PROCEDURES FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF PLAGIARISM (AND OTHER RELATED FORMS OF ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT) BY STAFF

**DATE APPROVED**  
(if different to the policy):

**MANAGER(S) RESPONSIBLE  
FOR IMPLEMENTATION,  
COMPLIANCE AND REVIEW:** DIRECTOR, HUMAN RESOURCES

### 1.0 DEFINITIONS

- 1.1 Investigator**  
An independent person appointed by the University to investigate an allegation of plagiarism against a staff member.
- 1.2 Misconduct**  
Conduct or behaviour which is not serious misconduct, but which is nonetheless unsatisfactory.
- 1.3 Relevant Senior Officer**  
This is the Vice-Chancellor in the case of an academic staff member, the Senior Deputy Vice – Chancellor and Director TAFE in the case of TAFE staff and in respect of a general staff member it is the relevant Principal Officer.
- 1.4 Serious Misbehaviour**  
Serious misbehaviour involves behaviour that is of a kind which constitutes (or conviction by a Court which constitutes) a serious impediment to the carrying out of a staff member's duties or to the staff member's colleagues carrying out their duties, or serious dereliction of the duties required of the position.
- 1.5 Supervisor**  
In the case of an academic, this means the head of the organisational unit in which the academic is employed, or another academic staff member classified at Level C or above appointed by the Vice-Chancellor to be supervisor of one or more academics or a group of academics, and in the case of a general staff member, the person to whom they are accountable. In the TAFE sector supervisor in the context of this procedure refers to the Head of Department (HOD).

### 2.0 REVIEW TIMELINE FOR PROCEDURES

### 3.0 PROCEDURES ADVISOR

Senior Project Officers, Human Resources, Policy and Planning Unit

## **4.0 THE PROCEDURES**

### **4.1 Introduction**

Victoria University considers plagiarism by a staff member to be misconduct (which includes serious misconduct) and a breach of its Code of Conduct. Plagiarism involves using another person's intellectual output and presenting it (without appropriate acknowledgement) as one's own. It is therefore an academically dishonest practice that seriously deviates from conduct that is acceptable within the scientific and scholarly community.

### **4.2 Protection of interested parties**

Allegations of staff plagiarism require careful handling. When an allegation of plagiarism is made against a staff member the protection of all interested parties is essential. Interested parties may include:

- i) the person bringing the allegation;
- ii) the person against whom an allegation is made;
- iii) research students/trainees and staff working with the person concerned;
- iv) journals in which allegedly fraudulent papers have been or are about to be published; and
- v) funding bodies that may have contributed to the body of the research, in which the plagiarised work appears.

### **4.3 The Receipt of Allegations**

**4.3.1** Allegations of staff plagiarism may originate from within the University, from other institutions, in learned journals or in the press. Allegations from outside the University must be referred to the Vice-Chancellor in the first instance. The Vice-Chancellor will then determine if he or she will nominate a designated person to deal with the matter.

**4.3.2** Where the allegation originates from within the University, the matter is to be referred to the relevant senior officer. The University however, encourages its staff to raise their concerns with their supervisor in the first instance. Persons intending to make an allegation should consider having a confidential meeting with the relevant Senior Officer to determine if lodging a formal allegation is appropriate. It may be that there are better ways of dealing with the perceived difficulty.

### **4.4 Lodging a Complaint**

**4.4.1** Allegations of staff plagiarism are to be made in writing to the relevant senior officer in the first instance.

**4.4.2** In the event the senior officer determines further investigation is not warranted the senior officer will determine an appropriate course of action. This may include guidance, counselling and/or appropriate staff development. A record of the counsel given will be kept and provided to the staff member.

**4.4.3** In the event the senior officer determines that the allegations warrant further investigation, the relevant senior officer will notify the staff member in writing and in sufficient detail to enable the staff member to understand the precise nature of the allegations. The senior officer will have therefore categorized the alleged plagiarism as a Level 1, Level 2 or Level 3 offence. The staff member then has ten working days to properly consider and submit a written response to the allegation of plagiarism.

At this stage or thereafter the relevant senior officer may suspend the staff member on full pay, or may suspend without pay:

- a) an academic if she/he is of the view that the alleged conduct amounts to serious misconduct;
- b) a general staff member if she/he considers the staff member's behaviour to be of sufficient seriousness to warrant summary action;

- c) a TAFE staff member if she/he is of the view that the alleged conduct amounts to serious misconduct.

#### **4.5 Action on completion of the Initial Investigation**

- 4.5.1 If the staff member denies the allegations and the relevant senior officer is of the view that there has been no misconduct or serious misconduct, she/he will immediately advise the staff member in writing, and may, by agreement with the staff member, publish the advice in an appropriate manner.
- 4.5.2 If the allegations are admitted in full by the staff member and the relevant senior officer is of the view that the conduct amounts to misconduct or serious misconduct, the relevant senior officer will advise the staff member in writing of her or his decision and the operative date of any disciplinary action.
- 4.5.3 If the allegation is denied in part or in full the relevant senior officer will refer the matter for investigation by an independent person, "the investigator", or by the Review and Appeals Committee. The staff member will decide if the investigation is to be conducted by the independent investigator or the Review and Appeals Committee.
- 4.5.4 If the staff member fails to respond to the allegation the matter will be referred by the senior officer to an independent investigator.
- 4.5.5 Alternatively, the relevant senior officer may decide to take no further action, or counsel or censure the staff member for unsatisfactory behaviour, and take no other action.

#### **4.6 The Independent Investigation**

- 4.6.1 Where a matter is referred to a Review and Appeals Committee or investigator, the Vice-Chancellor will convene the investigation within ten working days where practicable. The terms of reference of the investigation are to report in writing to the Vice-Chancellor as soon as practicable on the facts relating to the event(s) of alleged plagiarism including whether any mitigating circumstances are evident.
- 4.6.2 On receipt of the report of the Committee or investigator, and having considered its findings on the facts related to the alleged plagiarism, the Vice-Chancellor may take disciplinary action.
- 4.6.3 If, having considered the Committee's or investigator's findings on the facts relating to the alleged plagiarism, the Vice-Chancellor is of the view that there has been no misconduct or serious misconduct she/he will immediately advise the staff member in writing, and may, by agreement with the staff member, publish the advice in an appropriate manner.
- 4.6.4 Where a staff member has been suspended without pay pending the decision of the Vice-Chancellor, then any lost income will be reimbursed if there was no misconduct or serious misconduct or if the Vice-Chancellor so decides.
- 4.6.5 If the allegations are unfounded, action may be needed to redress any damage resulting from the allegation. If an external funding body was advised during the course of investigations that a preliminary determination had been made that the allegation was serious and warranted further investigation, and the staff member has been exonerated, then the external funding body must be advised accordingly.

#### **4.7 Action if the accused resigns**

- 4.7.1 If a staff member, against whom allegations of plagiarism have been made, resigns then procedures should cease immediately.

- 4.7.2** It is not necessarily satisfactory for an enquiry into plagiarism to be abandoned if a resignation is received. Almost always others will have been affected or will be affected, perhaps very seriously, unless the facts are determined. In such an event, the Vice-Chancellor or his or her nominee may convene an enquiry to report on any remedial action needed to protect affected people, bodies and the public.

## ASSOCIATED PROCEDURE 6.3

**TITLE:** PROCEDURES FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF PLAGIARISM (AND OTHER RELATED FORMS OF ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT) BY RESEARCH STUDENTS

**DATE APPROVED**  
(if different to the policy):

**MANAGER(S) RESPONSIBLE  
FOR IMPLEMENTATION,  
COMPLIANCE AND REVIEW:** Director, Postgraduate Research

### 1.0 PROCEDURES ADVISOR

Postgraduate Studies Officer

### 2.0 THE PROCEDURES

#### 2.1 Prevention and Education

All students will be provided with, or have access to, information about plagiarism, in particular descriptions of what is unacceptable and guidelines on how to avoid plagiarism. The Office of Postgraduate Research should disseminate this information through:

- orientation or induction programs;
- material available to students at the commencement of their studies (including the Policy);
- academic integrity courses and workshops for students and supervisors at key times of the year on specific and relevant subject matter for the cohort.

#### 2.2 Identification of possible Plagiarism within a VU Research Degree Program

Staff who suspect or discover plagiarism have the responsibility to take action.

2.2.1 If an academic staff member, other than the Supervisor, believes that a student has knowingly engaged in plagiarism, the staff member should inform the Supervisor. Alleged plagiarism reported by an external thesis examiner will be referred to the Director, Postgraduate Research.

2.2.2 If the Supervisor has evidence leading him/her to the conclusion that a student has engaged in plagiarism, he/she should discuss the basis of these concerns with the Chair, Postgraduate Research Committee to decide whether or not plagiarism has occurred.

2.2.3 These discussions may lead to the conclusion that plagiarism has not occurred, in which case there should be no further action.

2.2.4 Alternatively if it is reasonable to conclude that some plagiarism has occurred, the Supervisor (after consultation with the Chair, Postgraduate Research Committee) shall assess the level of seriousness taking into account the following considerations:

- i. What proportion of the work features plagiarized material or information that is the outcome of other academically dishonest practices? Less than 10% is generally thought of as minor, unless that includes they key element of foundation for that work.
- ii. Has there been some attempt, albeit inadequate, at referencing?
- iii. What is the weight of the assessment?
- iv. The academic level/experience of the student. All things being equal, a student new to study should not be treated in the same way as a postgraduate student in cases of alleged academic misconduct, including plagiarism.
- v. Cultural factors. The student is an overseas student who might have been taught to copy from authorities and consequently is having difficulty adjusting to new academic conventions. This would indicate the need for further teaching.
- vi. The level of information that was provided to the student on how to acknowledge extracts and quotations and construct arguments.
- vii. Has the student actively used the available support and advice for dealing with referring and citation issues and sound academic practice? Such actions would indicate both that they are pursuing their studies in good faith, and that they are genuinely less than totally clear about what constitutes good academic practice. It is reasonable to assume that instances of plagiarism in the work of such students are more likely to be accidental.

**2.2.5** There are three levels of Plagiarism:

Level 1 Plagiarism	Level 2 Plagiarism	Level 3 Plagiarism
This is inadequate or misleading citing, referencing or paraphrasing, arising mainly from a student's limited knowledge about plagiarism, or how to conform to academic conventions, or from carelessness or neglect rather than intention to deceive. Level 1 Plagiarism is not considered academic misconduct.	This is more serious than Level 1 Plagiarism and includes inappropriate or fraudulent acts or work arising from a student's ignorance of academic integrity or academic conventions (where adequate knowledge would have been expected), and where intention to deceive an assessor or cheat by way of plagiarism is apparent, but where the overall effect or consequence of the plagiarism does not significantly compromise the assessment process. Level 2 Plagiarism is considered academic misconduct.	This is more serious than Level 2 Plagiarism and includes copied or appropriated work arising from the clear intention to deceive an assessor, or premeditated cheating by way of plagiarism. The effect of the plagiarism is to seriously compromise the assessment process. Level 3 Plagiarism is considered academic misconduct.

**2.2.6** If the evidence is such as to indicate that Level 1 Plagiarism has occurred, the Supervisor or Co-supervisor and a member of the Faculty Graduate Studies Committee will meet with the student to determine the allegations.

**2.2.7** If Level 1 Plagiarism is found, the Supervisor will decide upon the applicable remedy, the focus here being on education and support. Remedial action permissible is outlined in the 'Schedule of Penalties and Remedies', found at attachment 1 to the policy.

- 2.2.8 If in the opinion of the Supervisor (after consultation with the Chair, Postgraduate Research Committee) the evidence is such as to indicate that Level 2 or Level 3 Plagiarism may have occurred, the matter will be referred to the Director, Postgraduate Research to confirm the seriousness of the alleged plagiarism.
- 2.2.9 A Level 2 or Level 3 Plagiarism allegation is heard by a panel of the Postgraduate Research Committee.
- 2.2.10 The Panel will consist of at least three members of the Postgraduate Research Committee, one of whom should be the Faculty representative from the student's Faculty. Where the Faculty representative on the Postgraduate Research Committee is not available for the hearing, the Committee should require the Dean to nominate a special Faculty representative to join the three other Committee members to form the Panel. The Postgraduate Research Committee will nominate the Chairperson for the panel and ensure that all members of the panel have not had previous involvement in the case nor have a vested interest in its outcome.
- 2.2.11 The Director, Postgraduate Research shall nominate a member of staff (which may be the Supervisor) with adequate knowledge of the case to present the allegation of plagiarism to the panel.
- 2.2.12 Information about the hearing and matters raised in the hearing should be distributed only to persons who have a direct decision making or administrative support role. Accordingly, within 14 days of the referral by the Director, Postgraduate Research, the secretary of the Postgraduate Research Committee shall
- notify the student in writing of the alleged breach accompanied by all relevant documentation;
  - ensure that the Postgraduate Research Committee Panel meets within 15 full University days from the time at which the student has been notified of the alleged breach, allowing the student reasonable time to prepare a response;
  - encourage the student to invite a support person/advocate, or Student Advisor who may speak on behalf of the student.
- 2.2.13 The Panel will address the issues of
- i) whether or not plagiarism has occurred;
  - ii) the appropriate penalties, if relevant.
- 2.2.14 Within 10 full University days, the student shall be notified by letter from the Chair of the Postgraduate Research Committee of any follow up action and the penalties (if any) that will ensue. The letter to the student outlining the decision should include:
- The nature of the allegation;
  - Attributing evidence;
  - Date and venue of hearing and who was present;
  - Decision;
  - Follow-up; and
  - Advice that the student may appeal to the University Discipline Committee.

### 2.3 The Investigation and Hearing of Complaints

All hearings involving allegations of plagiarism or other academic misconduct shall be characterised by the following elements:

- 2.3.1 Procedural fairness. This entails:
- i. The right to a fair hearing;

- ii. The right to attend hearings with an advocate, representative, friend or support person if required;
  - iii. All parties shall have the right to be heard before a decision is made, including the right to respond to any statements or evidence that may prejudice their case.
  - iv. The disclosure of all submissions to all parties prior to the hearing whereby students are able to have full knowledge of the nature and substance of all allegations;
  - v. The decision maker/s shall not be biased or appear to be biased (by a reasonable and informed bystander) nor have a vested interest or personal involvement in the matter of the complaint.
  - vi. A final decision that is based solely on the relevant evidence.
- 2.3.2** An emphasis on the timely resolution of the complaint.
- 2.3.3** Continuous improvement. The University is committed to a culture of continuous improvement, quality assurance, excellence and on-going process review, and actively encourages its students to submit their concerns, comments and ideas. Students may provide feedback and suggestions for improvements in matters relating to their University experience as part of the [Student Feedback and Complaints Policy](#).
- 2.3.4** The Director, Postgraduate Research will maintain confidential files of evidence and relevant records of decisions once an investigation has commenced. For example, a copy of the assessment, written records of meetings, phone conversations, emails and oral presentations by the student and the assessor. Advice can be sought from the Manager, Records and Archives on the applicable period of retention for these records.
- 2.3.5** Confidentiality. All information provided in plagiarism procedures is strictly confidential and can be used only for the investigation of the suspected plagiarism incident, unless:
- the express consent of the individual(s) concerned is obtained; or
  - the University has reasonable grounds for believing that the use of the information will reduce a threat to the life or health of any person; or the use is specifically required by law.
- 2.3.6** In cases where the student pleads not guilty, the decision maker will decide on the student's guilt or innocence. The standard of proof required to making a guilty finding is that the decision maker, after evaluating the evidence, is reasonably satisfied that the case against the student has been established.
- 2.3.7** Prior to imposing any penalty or making a decision on remedial action, the decision maker will take into account relevant considerations such as:
- any previous offences;
  - any adverse consequences for the student resulting from a finding of guilt or from the imposition of a particular penalty. For example, loss of residency, professional/workplace retention, cultural implications;
  - the level of remorse or co-operation exhibited;
  - the offender was under duress;
  - if the offending work was in final draft thesis material or in a submitted thesis;
  - degree of pre-meditation;
  - the nature and the extent of plagiarism;
  - the standard of the performance of the student in past assessment in the course.

## **2.4 Appeals**

Appeals shall only be considered on the issue of process.

- 2.4.1** The student has the right to appeal to the University Discipline Committee to review the decision, (including the penalty) if the student feels that the process was not fair.
- 2.4.2** Any staff member involved in any part of the process (other than in the capacity of the respondent) may appeal the decision to a full sitting of the Postgraduate Research Committee. No appeal forum should include someone with a conflict of interest.
- 2.4.3** If dissatisfied with the decision of the Postgraduate Research Committee, the staff member can request a further review by the Education and Research Board, on the grounds that the

process did not conform to the university policy on *Academic Honesty and Preventing Plagiarism*. No appeal forum should include a member with a conflict of interest.

- 2.4.4 If there are concurrent appeals by a student and staff member, that appeal will be heard by a special panel convened by the Education and Research Board.

## 2.5 Record keeping

- 2.5.1 The Director, Postgraduate Research will maintain confidential files of evidence and relevant records of decisions once an investigation has commenced.
- 2.5.2 The Director, Postgraduate Research will report findings of Plagiarism and academic misconduct to the Department of Student Services so that these may be recorded on the Central Database of Plagiarism, Academic Misconduct and Disciplinary Offences.
- 2.5.3 The Office of Postgraduate Research will keep a record of all suspected incidents of plagiarism brought to the attention of the Chair, Postgraduate Research Committee. The Director of Postgraduate Research will review the procedural aspects of these records to ensure that they have been dealt with according to the appropriate University Regulations, Policies and Procedures and will report on the operation of the policy annually at the March meeting of the Education and Research Board.

## ASSOCIATED PROCEDURE 6.4

**TITLE:**

Procedures for the Management of Plagiarism (and other related forms of academic misconduct) by Students *other than Research Students*

**DATE APPROVED**

(if different to the policy):

**MANAGER(S) RESPONSIBLE  
FOR IMPLEMENTATION,  
COMPLIANCE AND REVIEW:**

Executive Deans/Executive Directors & Dean

### 1.0 THE PROCEDURES

In order to maintain high standards of academic integrity, it is the obligation of every member of the University to know and to respect the rules concerning plagiarism and other related forms of misconduct as set out under this policy and to seek to foster a learning environment that encourages the development of academic skills that are appropriate to that Unit of Study.

Therefore all teaching staff and administrative staff who interact with students should be aware of the:

- appropriate sources of assistance for students facing academic or other problems;
- strategies to minimise opportunities for students to engage in plagiarism;
- the appropriate approach to citation and referencing within their discipline and be able to communicate and model this to their students;
- responsibility for early notification and fair warning to students where there is a risk of plagiarism;
- responsibility for detection and referral.

#### 1.1 Handling Allegations of Plagiarism

Staff who suspect or discover plagiarism have the responsibility to take action.

- 1.1.1 If a teacher or tutor has evidence leading him/her to the conclusion that a student has engaged in plagiarism, he/she should discuss the basis of these concerns with the Program Manager/Course Co-ordinator to decide whether or not plagiarism has occurred.
- 1.1.2 These discussions may lead to the conclusion that plagiarism has not occurred, in which case there should be no further action.
- 1.1.3 Where plagiarism is reasonably evident, the teacher or tutor (after consultation with the Program Manager/Course Co-ordinator) shall assess the level of seriousness taking into account the following considerations:
  - i. What proportion of the work features plagiarized material or information that is the outcome of other academically dishonest practices? Less than 10% is generally thought of as minor, unless that includes they key element of foundation for that work.
  - ii. Has there been some attempt, albeit inadequate, at referencing?
  - iii. What is the weight of the assessment?
  - iv. The academic level/experience of the student. All things being equal, a student new

- to study should not be treated in the same way as a postgraduate student in cases of alleged academic misconduct, including plagiarism.
- v. Cultural factors. The student is an overseas student who might have been taught to copy from authorities and consequently is having difficulty adjusting to new academic conventions. This would indicate the need for further teaching.
  - vi. The level of information that was provided to the student on how to acknowledge extracts and quotations and construct arguments.
  - vii. Has the student actively used the available support and advice for dealing with referring and citation issues and sound academic practice? Such actions would indicate both that they are pursuing their studies in good faith, and that they are genuinely less than totally clear about what constitutes good academic practice. It is reasonable to assume that instances of plagiarism in the work of such students are more likely to be accidental.

**1.1.4** There are three levels of Plagiarism:

Level 1 Plagiarism	Level 2 Plagiarism	Level 3 Plagiarism
This is inadequate or misleading citing, referencing or paraphrasing, arising mainly from a student's limited knowledge about plagiarism, or how to conform to academic conventions, or from carelessness or neglect rather than intention to deceive. Level 1 Plagiarism is not considered academic misconduct.	This is more serious than Level 1 Plagiarism and includes inappropriate or fraudulent acts or work arising from a student's ignorance of academic integrity or academic conventions (where adequate knowledge would have been expected), and where intention to deceive an assessor or cheat by way of plagiarism is apparent, but where the overall effect or consequence of the plagiarism does not significantly compromise the assessment process. Level 2 Plagiarism is considered academic misconduct.	This is more serious than Level 2 Plagiarism and includes copied or appropriated work arising from the clear intention to deceive an assessor, or premeditated cheating by way of plagiarism. The effect of the plagiarism is to seriously compromise the assessment process. Level 3 Plagiarism is considered academic misconduct.

- 1.1.5** If the evidence is such as to indicate that Level 1 Plagiarism has occurred, the teacher or tutor and the Program Manager/Course Co-ordinator (or their nominee) will meet with the student to determine the allegations. The hearing will need to be conducted in a way that is consistent with section 2.2 of these procedures, *The Investigation and Hearing of Complaints*. At the hearing, the teacher or tutor will complete the Plagiarism Interview Checklist (Attachment 3 to the Policy) and ensure that a copy is provided to the student and the Course Co-ordinator/Program Manager.
- 1.1.6** As a result of this hearing, the staff members may decide that no plagiarism has taken place. If Level 1 Plagiarism is found, the teacher or tutor will decide upon the applicable remedy, the focus here being on education and support. Remedial action that is permissible is outlined in the 'Schedule of Penalties and Remedies' found at attachment 1 to the policy.
- 1.1.7** If the weight of evidence is such as to reasonably indicate that Level 2 or Level 3 Plagiarism has occurred, the matter is taken by the Program Manager/Course Co-ordinator to the Head of Department/Head of School for consultation and a decision on whether it constitutes a

Level 2 or Level 3 offence. The factors listed under 2.1.3 must be taken into account in making this assessment.

- 1.1.8 Level 2 Plagiarism is handled at the Head of School/Head of Department level. The Head of School/Head of Department will convene a small panel comprising:

- the Head of School/Department (Chair);
- the Course-Cordinator/Program Manager;
- one other staff member from the relevant teaching area;
- a nominee of the Executive Dean or Dean or Executive Director.

The Head of School will ensure that all members of the panel have not had previous involvement in the case nor have a vested interest in its outcome.

- 1.1.9 This section should be read in conjunction with part 2.2 – *The Investigation and Hearing of Complaints*. Information about the hearing and matters raised in the hearing should be distributed only to persons who have a direct decision making or administrative support role. Accordingly, within 14 days of the referral by the Course Co-ordinator/Program Manager, the Head of School/Head of Department shall-

- nominate a member of staff with adequate knowledge of the case to present the allegation of plagiarism to the panel;
- notify the student in writing of the alleged breach accompanied by all relevant documentation;
- ensure that the panel meets within 15 full University days from the time at which the student has been notified of the alleged breach, allowing the student reasonable time to prepare a response;
- encourage the student to invite a support person/advocate, or Student Advisor who may speak on behalf of the student.

*Letter 1 as attached to the policy (or a modified and consistent version thereof) can be used for this purpose.*

- 1.1.10 The Panel will address the issues of

- whether or not plagiarism has occurred;
- the appropriate penalties, if relevant.

- 1.1.11 Within 10 full University days, the student shall be notified by letter from the Head of School/Head of Department of any follow up action and the penalties (if any) that will ensue.

The letter to the student outlining the decision should include:

- The nature of the allegation;
- Attributing evidence;
- Date and venue of hearing and who was present;
- Decision;
- Follow-up; and
- Advice that the student may appeal to the University Discipline Committee.

*Letter 2 as attached to the policy (or a modified and consistent version thereof) can be used for this purpose.*

- 1.1.12 Where the Head of School/Head of Department determines that the evidence is such as to indicate Level 3 Plagiarism, the matter is referred to the Executive Dean or Associate Director who shall convene a small panel comprising:

- the Executive Dean/Dean/Executive Director (or nominee) (Chair);
- the Chair or Deputy Chair of the Education and Research Board (or nominee);
- the Faculty Associate Dean (Teaching and Learning) or a TAFE Senior Educator with responsibility in that School;
- the Head of School or nominee.

The Executive Dean or Dean or Executive Director will ensure that all members of the panel have not had previous involvement in the case nor have a vested interest in its outcome.

- 1.1.13** This section should be read in conjunction with part 2.2 – *The Investigation and Hearing of Complaints*. Information about the hearing and matters raised in the hearing should be distributed only to persons who have a direct decision making or administrative support role. Accordingly, within 14 days of the referral by the Head of School/Head of Department, the Executive Dean/Dean/Executive Director shall-
- nominate a member of staff with adequate knowledge of the case to present the allegation of plagiarism to the panel;
  - notify the student in writing of the alleged breach accompanied by all relevant documentation;
  - ensure that the panel meets within 15 full University days from the time at which the student has been notified of the alleged breach, allowing the student reasonable time to prepare a response;
  - encourage the student to invite a support person/advocate, or Student Advisor who may speak on behalf of the student.

*Letter 1 as attached to the policy (or a modified and consistent version thereof) can be used for this purpose.*

- 1.1.14** The Panel will address the issues of

- whether or not plagiarism has occurred;
- the appropriate penalties, if relevant.

- 1.1.15** Within 10 normal University days, the student shall be notified by letter from the Executive Dean/Associate Director of the decision, of any follow up action and the penalties (if any) that will ensue.

The letter to the student outlining the decision should include:

- The nature of the incident;
- Attributing evidence;
- Date and venue of hearing and who was present;
- Decision;
- Follow-up;
- Advice that the student may appeal to the University Discipline Committee.

*'Letter 3' as attached to this policy (or a modified and consistent version thereof) can be used for this purpose.*

## **1.2 The Investigation and Hearing of Complaints**

All hearings involving allegations of plagiarism or other academic misconduct shall be characterised by the following elements:

- 1.2.1** Procedural fairness. This entails:
- i. The right to a fair hearing;

- ii. The right to attend hearings with an advocate, representative, friend or support person if required;
  - iii. All parties shall have the right to be heard before a decision is made, including the right to respond to any statements or evidence that may prejudice their case.
  - iv. The disclosure of all submissions to all parties prior to the hearing whereby students are able to have full knowledge of the nature and substance of all allegations;
  - v. The decision maker/s shall not be biased or appear to be biased (by a reasonable and informed bystander) nor have a vested interest or personal involvement in the matter of the complaint.
  - vi. A final decision that is based solely on the relevant evidence.
- 1.2.2** An emphasis on the timely resolution of the complaint.
- 1.2.3** Continuous improvement. The University is committed to a culture of continuous improvement, quality assurance, excellence and on-going process review, and actively encourages its students to submit their concerns, comments and ideas. Students may provide feedback and suggestions for improvements in matters relating to their University experience as part of the [Student Feedback and Complaints Policy](#).
- 1.2.4** The Course Co-ordinator/Program Manager will maintain confidential files of evidence and relevant records of decisions once an investigation has commenced. For example, a copy of the assessment, written records of meetings, phone conversations, emails and oral presentations by the student and the assessor. Advice can be sought from the Manager, Records and Archives on the applicable period of retention for these records.
- 1.2.5** Confidentiality. All information provided in plagiarism procedures is strictly confidential and can be used only for the investigation of the suspected plagiarism incident, unless:
  - the express consent of the individual(s) concerned is obtained; or
  - the University has reasonable grounds for believing that the use of the information will reduce a threat to the life or health of any person; or the use is specifically required by law.
- 1.2.6** In cases where the student pleads not guilty, the decision maker will decide on the student's guilt or innocence. The standard of proof required to making a guilty finding is that the decision maker, after evaluating the evidence, is reasonably satisfied that the case against the student has been established.
- 1.2.7** Prior to imposing any penalty or making a decision on remedial action, the decision maker will take into account relevant considerations such as:
  - any previous offences;
  - any adverse consequences for the student resulting from a finding of guilt or from the imposition of a particular penalty. For example, loss of residency, professional/workplace retention, cultural implications;
  - the level of remorse or co-operation exhibited;
  - the offender was under duress;
  - if the offending work was in final draft thesis material or in a submitted thesis;
  - degree of pre-meditation;
  - the nature and the extent of plagiarism;
  - the standard of the performance of the student in past assessment in the course.

### **1.3      Appeal**

Appeals shall only be considered on the issue of process.

- 1.3.1** A student who has had a finding of plagiarism made against them and who is aggrieved by the decision (including the penalty) can appeal to the University Discipline Committee to review the decision, if the student feels that the process was not fair.
- 1.3.2** Any staff member involved in any part of the process may appeal the decision made by a Head of School/Head of Department (Level 2 Plagiarism) or a decision by the Executive Dean/Associate Director, (Level 3 Plagiarism) to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education

Programs) and Director of TAFE, to review the decision on the grounds that the process did not conform to the policy.

- 1.3.3 Any student who has referred an allegation of academic misconduct covered by the policy to a member of staff and that in turn is not found, can appeal for a review of this finding to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education Programs) and Director of TAFE.

#### **1.4 Record keeping**

- 1.4.1 The Course Co-ordinator/Program Manager will maintain confidential files of evidence and relevant records of decisions once an investigation has commenced.
- 1.4.2 The Course Co-ordinator/Program Manager will report findings of plagiarism and academic misconduct to the Department of Student Services so that these may be recorded on the Central Database of Plagiarism, Academic Misconduct and Disciplinary Offences.
- 1.4.3 The Faculty/TAFE School will keep a record of all suspected incidents of plagiarism brought to the attention of the Course Co-ordinator/Program Manager. The Associate Deans (Teaching and Learning) and the Associate Directors (or nominees) will review the procedural aspects of these records to ensure that they have been dealt with according to the appropriate University Regulations, Policies and Procedures and will report on the operation of the policy annually at the March meeting of the Education and Research Board.

#### **1.5 Continuous Improvement**

Academic and teaching staff shall bring concerns relating to issues associated with academic integrity, plagiarism and collusion to Faculty Boards of Studies/School Boards and other designated group meetings.

## ATTACHMENT 1

### SCHEDULE OF PENALTIES AND REMEDIES AND WHO CAN IMPOSE THEM

#### LEVEL ONE PLAGIARISM

(The level is determined by the Teacher or Tutor after consultation with the Program Manager or Course Co-ordinator, and in the case of Postgraduate Research Degrees, by the Research Supervisor after consultation with the Chair, Postgraduate Research Committee)

Remedies	Who by?
<p>The University's response to Level 1 Plagiarism is educative. The following remedies apply:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. It is compulsory for the student to re-submit the assessment after he or she has edited or totally rewritten it, as appropriate, so that it meets the required academic standards.</li><li>2. <b>In addition to this requirement, one or more of the following:</b><ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. require the student to access the reading and writing services provided through <a href="#">Student Learning Services</a> in completing the assessment;</li><li>b. require the student to arrange a time with the teacher or tutor to clarify subject specific expectations;</li><li>c. require the student to seek out and to undertake training on proper academic/scholarly conventions and techniques;</li><li>d. require the student to enrol in a Plagiarism Workshop; e. counselling.</li></ol></li></ol>	Teacher or tutor or Research Supervisor

#### LEVEL TWO PLAGIARISM

(The level is determined by the Program Manager or Course Co-ordinator, and in the case of Postgraduate Research Degrees, by the Director, Postgraduate Research)

Penalties and Actions	Who by?
<p>Level 2 Plagiarism constitutes Academic Misconduct.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. If found guilty, one or more of the following penalties <b>must</b> be imposed reflect the seriousness of the University's commitment to academic integrity:<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. re-submit the assessment task with a reduced capped mark;</li><li>b. downgrading the mark and/or failing the item of assessment;</li><li>c. require the student to complete a comparable but different assessment task with or without a capped mark;</li><li>d. award no marks for the assessment task;</li><li>e. downgrading a final grade in a unit of study;</li><li>f. imposing a grade of fail in a unit or units;</li><li>g. an undertaking to never again breach University legislation, policies and procedures for the duration of his/her enrolment;</li><li>h. require the student to meet and to apologise formally to any aggrieved party;</li><li>i. suspend the student from the research degree for an appropriate period of time;</li><li>j. require the student to rewrite any part of the thesis that has been plagiarized and to re-submit this within 45 days;</li></ol></li></ol>	Head of School (or nominee) or Head of Department (or nominee) or Postgraduate Research Committee

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>k. issue a written warning that clearly articulates the conditions under which no further action will be taken and any penalties if there are further infringements.</li> </ul> <p>2. <b>In addition to this requirement, one or more of the following:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. require the student to access the reading and writing services provided through <a href="#">Student Learning Services</a>;</li> <li>b. require the student to seek out and to undertake training on proper academic/scholarly conventions and techniques;</li> <li>c. require the student to enrol in a Plagiarism Workshop;</li> <li>d. counselling.</li> </ul>	
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## LEVEL THREE PLAGIARISM

(The level is determined by the Head of Department or Head of School, and in the case of Postgraduate Research Degrees, by the Director, Postgraduate Research)

Penalties and Actions	Who by?
<p>Level 3 Plagiarism constitutes Academic Misconduct.</p> <p>1. If found guilty, one or more of the following penalties <b>must</b> be imposed reflecting the seriousness of the University's commitment to academic integrity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. award no marks for the assessment task;</li> <li>b. downgrading a final grade in a unit of study;</li> <li>c. imposing a grade of fail in a unit or units;</li> <li>d. require the student to meet and to apologise formally to any aggrieved party;</li> <li>e. suspend the student from the research degree for an appropriate period of time;</li> <li>f. require the student to rewrite any part of the thesis that has been plagiarized and to re-submit this within 45 days;</li> <li>g. an undertaking to never again breach University legislation, policies and procedures for the duration of his/her enrolment;</li> <li>h. issue a written warning that clearly articulates the conditions under which no further action will be taken and any penalties if there are further infringements;</li> <li>i. suspend the student from the University for a period of time not less than six (6) months and not greater than twelve (12) months;</li> <li>j. exclusion from enrolment in a particular program and/or course(s) permanently or for a lesser period;</li> <li>k. exclusion from the University;</li> <li>l. award a fail classification for the thesis;</li> <li>m. withdrawal of the thesis from the examination process;</li> <li>n. revocation of an Academic Award.</li> </ul> <p>2. <b>Where appropriate, one or more of the following:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. require the student to seek out and to undertake training on proper academic/scholarly conventions and techniques;</li> <li>b. require the student to enrol in a Plagiarism Workshop;</li> <li>c. counselling.</li> </ul>	<p>Associate Director (or nominee) or Executive Dean (or nominee) or Postgraduate Research Committee or Panel of University Discipline Committee.</p> <p>Only Council can revoke an academic award.</p>

**Figure 2**      **Staff**

Penalty/Response	Senior Officer	Vice-Chancellor (or (or nominee)
Guidance Counselling and/or appropriate staff development		
Staff member suspended on full pay		
Staff member suspended without pay		
Refer the matter to an Independent Investigator or to a Review and Appeals Committee		
Disciplinary action against the staff member		
Following the investigation and report by an Independent Investigator or a Review and Appeals Committee, where the allegation is proven to be unfounded, action may be needed to redress any damage resulting from the allegation.		
Reimbursement of lost income if a staff member has been suspended without pay		

## ATTACHMENT 2

To access a word copy of the attachment [click here](#)



# ASSESSMENT DECLARATION

This form must be completed, signed, dated and attached to each assessment task that you submit for marking.

## SCHOOL/FACULTY NAME

### 1. ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

STUDENT NAME	STUDENT ID NUMBER	UNIT OF STUDY
TITLE OF ASSESSMENT:		
DATE DUE:	DATE SUBMITTED:	
LECTURER'S NAME (HIGHER EDUCATION ONLY)		
TUTORIAL/CLASS TIME:		

### 2. COMPULSORY STUDENT DECLARATION

Plagiarism means using another person's intellectual output and presenting it (without appropriate acknowledgement of the author or source) as one's own.

Plagiarism constitutes academic misconduct. Where there are reasonable grounds for believing that this has occurred, disciplinary procedures as outlined in the *Policy for Academic Honesty and Preventing Plagiarism* will be instituted.

PLEASE TICK TO INDICATE THAT YOU HAVE SATISFIED THESE REQUIREMENTS-

- I have read the policy on *Academic Honesty and Preventing Plagiarism* and the relevant referencing guides (or have had this explained to me by my teachers) and understand the consequences of committing academic misconduct as outlined in the policy.
- This assignment is my own work, I have not participated in collusion, nor have I previously submitted this or a version of it for assessment in any other Unit of Study at the University or any other institution without having obtained the approval of the teacher.
- I have taken proper and reasonable care to prevent this work from being copied by another student.
- So that the assessor can properly assess my work, I give this person permission to act according to University policy and practice to reproduce this work and provide a copy to another member of staff for the purpose of cross checking and moderation and to take steps to authenticate the assessment, including submitting a copy to a checking/detection system that in turn may retain a copy of this work on a database for future checking.

*"The current official version of this policy is maintained on the Victoria University Central Policy Register and downloading and printing of this policy will produce an uncontrolled copy which may not be current."*

- I have carefully read the assessment criteria that will be used to evaluate my work as given below -

**ASSESSMENT CRITERIA**

I certify that the statements I have attested to above have been made in good faith and are true and correct. I also certify that this is my work and that I have not plagiarized the work of others and not participated in collusion.

SIGNATURE:

DATE:

## ATTACHMENT 3

To access a word copy of the attachment [click here](#)



# PLAGIARISM CHECKLIST

This is designed to guide discussions that occur between students and staff involving Level 1 Plagiarism.

**Student Name:**

**Student Number:**

PLEASE ENSURE THAT ALL TOPICS ARE COVERED THOROUGHLY DURING THE INTERVIEW AND WHERE RELEVANT AND POSSIBLE INDICATE THE COMPLETION OF EACH TOPIC. A COPY OF THIS FORM WILL BE SENT TO THE STUDENT AND TO THE DIRECTOR, STUDENT SERVICES (OR DELEGATE) FOR INCLUSION ON THE STUDENT FILE WITHIN 7 DAYS AFTER THE INTERVIEW.

Action	Completion: Yes or No	Comments
The student was given an opportunity to explain what may have occurred in relation to this assessment.		
The concept of academic integrity and its importance to the work of the University were explained.		
Breaches against academic integrity, such as plagiarism and collusion were defined and explained.		
Information on strategies to avoid plagiarism have been identified for the student. This can include relevant Student Learning Services courses.		
The proper Faculty/School academic conventions and techniques, including acknowledgement have been articulated.		
The student has been alerted to the penalties for academic misconduct including plagiarism and collusion.		

I have counselled this student on all of the foregoing matters and the applicable penalties. A copy of this letter will be sent to the student and retained on the student's file at the Department of Student Services and may be accessed by decision makers at the University in the event that an allegation of plagiarism (or any other form of academic dishonesty) is levelled against you in the future.

**Signatures**

**Staff member**

Date:

**Student**

Date:

To access a word copy of the attachment [click here](#)

ATTACHMENT 4

**LETTER 1: Notification by the Head of School of a scheduled hearing – Level 2**

Student ID Number

DATE

Name of student

Address

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

I wish to advise you that your Course Co-ordinator/Program Manager has referred to me an allegation against you involving Level 2 Plagiarism in the **subject Code and name of unit of study**, under the provisions of section 1.1.7 of the *Procedures for the Management of Plagiarism (and other related forms of Academic Misconduct) by students other than Research students.*

It is my duty to inform you that in accordance with these procedures, a panel will be convened within 15 normal University days of the date of this letter to allow you adequate time to prepare a response. The panel will comprise:

- Name of Head of School/Department or nominee;
- Name of relevant Course Coordinator/Program Manager;
- Name of one member of staff from the relevant teaching area;
- Name of the staff member nominated by the Executive Dean or Dean or Executive Director.

I would take this opportunity to encourage you to contact the University's Student Advisory Services on 9919 4360 to arrange contact with a Student Advisor who can provide you with advice and assistance with the preparation of your case, or indeed any other representative or support person that you choose.

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me by telephone on: **contact phone number**. The University's policy on Academic Honesty and Preventing Plagiarism is attached together with the procedures under which this action is taken.

Yours sincerely,

Name of Head of School

cc. Student File: Faculty of /School of

To access a word copy of the attachment [click here](#)

ATTACHMENT 5

## LETTER 2: Notification by the Head of School of the Level 2 hearing outcome

Student ID Number

DATE

Name of student

Address

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

I wish to advise you of the decision of the panel convened on Date of hearing under the provisions of section 1.1.8 of the *Procedures for the Management of Plagiarism (and other related forms of academic misconduct) by Students other than Research Students* that are attached to the University's *Policy for Academic Honesty and Preventing Plagiarism*. In reaching the decision, the panel took the following factors into account:

- Your study level and experience;
- The relevant teaching area's dissemination to students of information about plagiarism;
- The circumstances of the alleged incident;
- Previous incidents or breaches by the student;
- Degree of pre-meditation;
- Degree of remorse or co-operation.

### Composition of the School Panel

The panel comprised-

- Name of Head of School/Department or nominee;
- Name of relevant Course Coordinator/Program Manager;
- Name of one member of staff from the relevant teaching area;
- Name of the staff member nominated by the Executive Dean or Dean or Executive Director.

The Hearing was also attended by names of any other people present.

### Decision

The panel determined that

Option One: In the event that the case is dismissed a selection from the following words can be used-

The case be dismissed with no further action.

OR

Option Two: In the event that the case is found a selection of the following words is used-

The allegation of Level 2 Plagiarism in relation to subject **Code and name of subject** was established. In accordance with the penalties/actions available to it, the panel determined the following action(s):

- a. re-submit the assessment task with a reduced capped mark;
  - b. downgrading the mark and/or failing the item of assessment;
  - c. require the student to complete a comparable but different assessment task with or without a capped mark;
  - e. award no marks for the assessment task;
  - e. downgrading a final grade in a unit of study;
  - f. imposing a grade of fail in a unit or units;
  - g. an undertaking to never again breach University legislation, policies and procedures for the duration of his/her enrolment;
  - h. require the student to meet and to apologise formally to any aggrieved party;
  - i. suspend the student from the research degree for an appropriate period of time;
  - j. require the student to rewrite any part of the thesis that has been plagiarized and to re-submit this within 45 days;
  - k. issue a written warning that clearly articulates the conditions under which no further action will be taken and any penalties if there are further infringements.
2. **In addition to this requirement, one or more of the following:**
- a. require the student to access the reading and writing services provided through [Student Learning Services](#);
  - b. require the student to seek out and to undertake training on proper academic/scholarly conventions and techniques;
  - c. require the student to enrol in a Plagiarism Workshop;
  - d. counselling

**Right of Appeal**

It is my duty to inform you that you have the right to appeal to the University Discipline Committee to review the decision, if you feel that the process was not fair.

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me by telephone on: [contact phone number](#).

Yours sincerely,

[Name of Head]

cc. Department of Student Services – Central Database of Plagiarism, Academic Misconduct and Disciplinary Offences

## ATTACHMENT 6

### **LETTER 3: Notification by the Executive Dean/Dean/Executive Director of a scheduled hearing for a Level 3 Plagiarism Offence**

**Student ID Number**

**DATE**

**Name of student**

**Address**

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

I wish to advise you that your Head of School has referred to me an allegation against you involving Level 3 Plagiarism in the subject **Code and name of unit of study**, under the provisions of section 1.1.12 of the *Procedures for the Management of Plagiarism (and other related forms of Academic Misconduct) by students other than Research students*.

It is my duty to inform you that in accordance with these procedures, a panel will be convened within 15 normal University days of the date of this letter to allow you adequate time to prepare a response. The panel will comprise:

- Name of Head of School/Department or nominee;
- Name of relevant Course Coordinator/Program Manager;
- Name of one member of staff from the relevant teaching area;
- Name of the Head of School or nominee.

I would take this opportunity to encourage you to contact the University's Student Advisory Services on 9919 4360 to arrange contact with a Student Advisor who can provide you with advice and assistance with the preparation of your case, or indeed any other representative or support person that you choose.

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me by telephone on: **contact phone number**. The University's policy on Academic Honesty and Preventing Plagiarism is attached together with the procedures under which this action is taken.

Yours sincerely,

**Name of the Executive Dean/Dean/Executive Director**

cc.    Student File: Faculty of /School of

To access a word copy of the attachment [click here](#)

ATTACHMENT 7

**LETTER 4: Notification by the Executive Dean/Dean/Executive Director of the Level 3 hearing outcome**

Student ID Number

DATE

Name of student

Address

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

I wish to advise you of the decision of the panel convened on [Date of hearing] under the provisions of section 1.1.12 of the *Procedures for the Management of Plagiarism (and other related forms of academic misconduct) by Students other than Research Students* that are attached to the University's *Policy for Academic Honesty and Preventing Plagiarism*. In reaching the decision, the panel took the following factors into account:

- Your study level and experience;
- The relevant teaching area's dissemination to students of information about plagiarism;
- The circumstances of the alleged incident;
- Previous incidents or breaches by the student;
- Degree of pre-meditation;
- Degree of remorse or co-operation.

**Composition of the School Panel**

The panel comprised-

- Name of Executive Dean or Dean or Executive Director (Chair);
- Name of Chair or Deputy Chair (ERB) or nominee;
- Name of the Faculty Associate Dean (Teaching and Learning) or VE/FE Senior Educator with responsibility in that School;
- the Head of School or nominee.

**Decision**

In reviewing your case concerning an allegation of Level 3 plagiarism in relation to subject Code and name of subject, I have determined that

**Option One: In the event that the case is dismissed a selection from the following words can be used-**

the case be dismissed with no further action. I would be pleased to discuss the process that has been undertaken with you, if you have any queries about fairness.

OR

**Option Two: In the event that the case is found a selection of the following words is used-**

- a. award no marks for the assessment task;

- b. downgrading a final grade in a unit of study;
  - c. imposing a grade of fail in a unit or units;
  - d. require the student to meet and to apologise formally to any aggrieved party;
  - e. suspend the student from the research degree for an appropriate period of time;
  - f. require the student to rewrite any part of the thesis that has been plagiarized and to re-submit this within 45 days;
  - g. an undertaking to never again breach University legislation, policies and procedures for the duration of his/her enrolment;
  - h. issue a written warning that clearly articulates the conditions under which no further action will be taken and any penalties if there are further infringements;
  - i. suspend the student from the University for a period of time not less than six (6) months and not greater than twelve (12) months;
  - j. exclusion from enrolment in a particular program and/or course(s) permanently or for a lesser period;
  - k. exclusion from the University;
  - l. award a fail classification for the thesis;
  - m. withdrawal of the thesis from the examination process;
  - n. revocation of an Academic Award.
2. **Where appropriate, one or more of the following:**
- a. require the student to seek out and to undertake training on proper academic/scholarly conventions and techniques;
  - b. require the student to enrol in a Plagiarism Workshop;
  - c. counselling.

**Right of Appeal**

It is my duty to inform you that you have the right to appeal to the University Discipline Committee to review the decision, if you feel that the process was not fair.

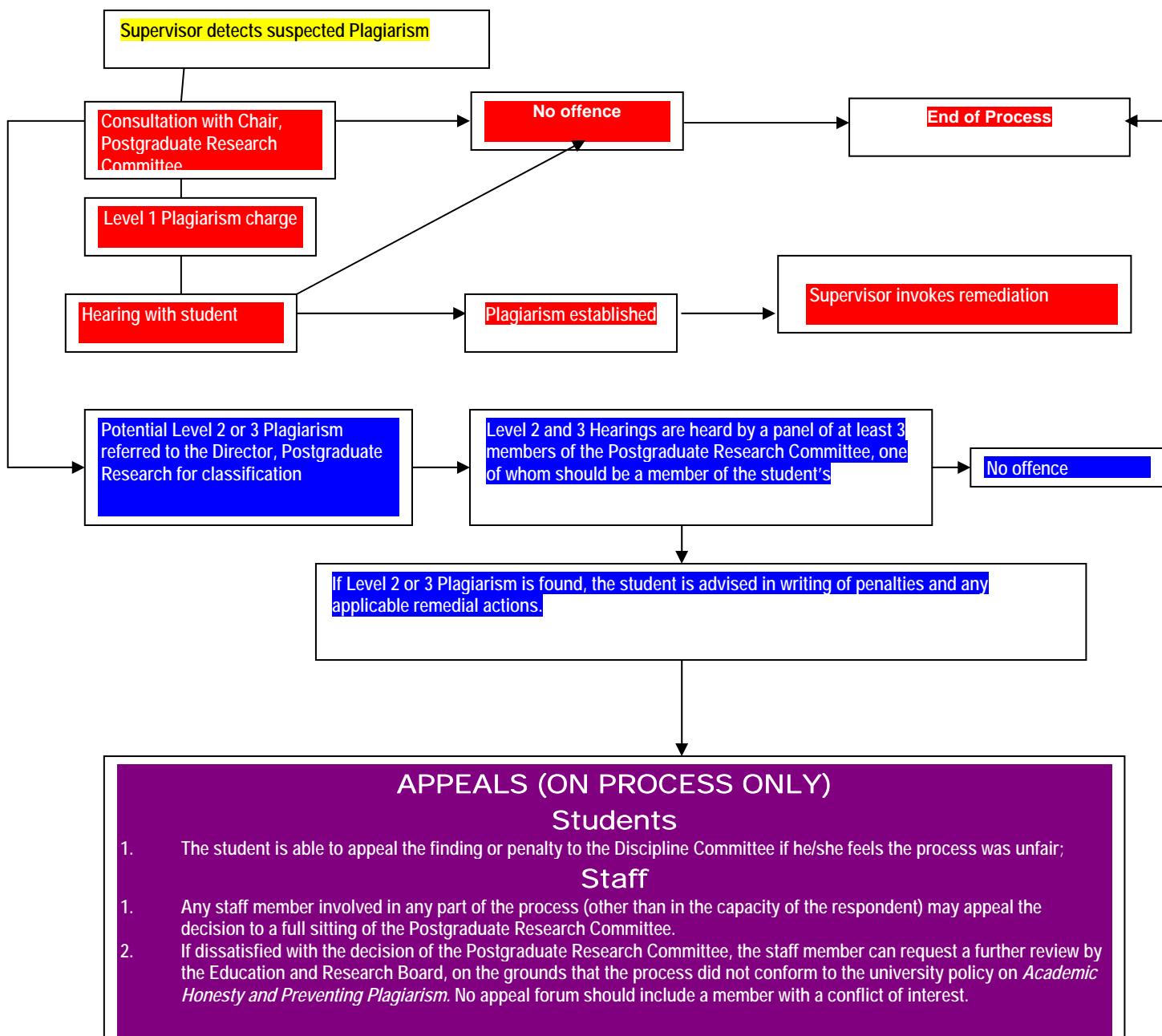
If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me by telephone on: [contact phone number](#).

Yours sincerely,

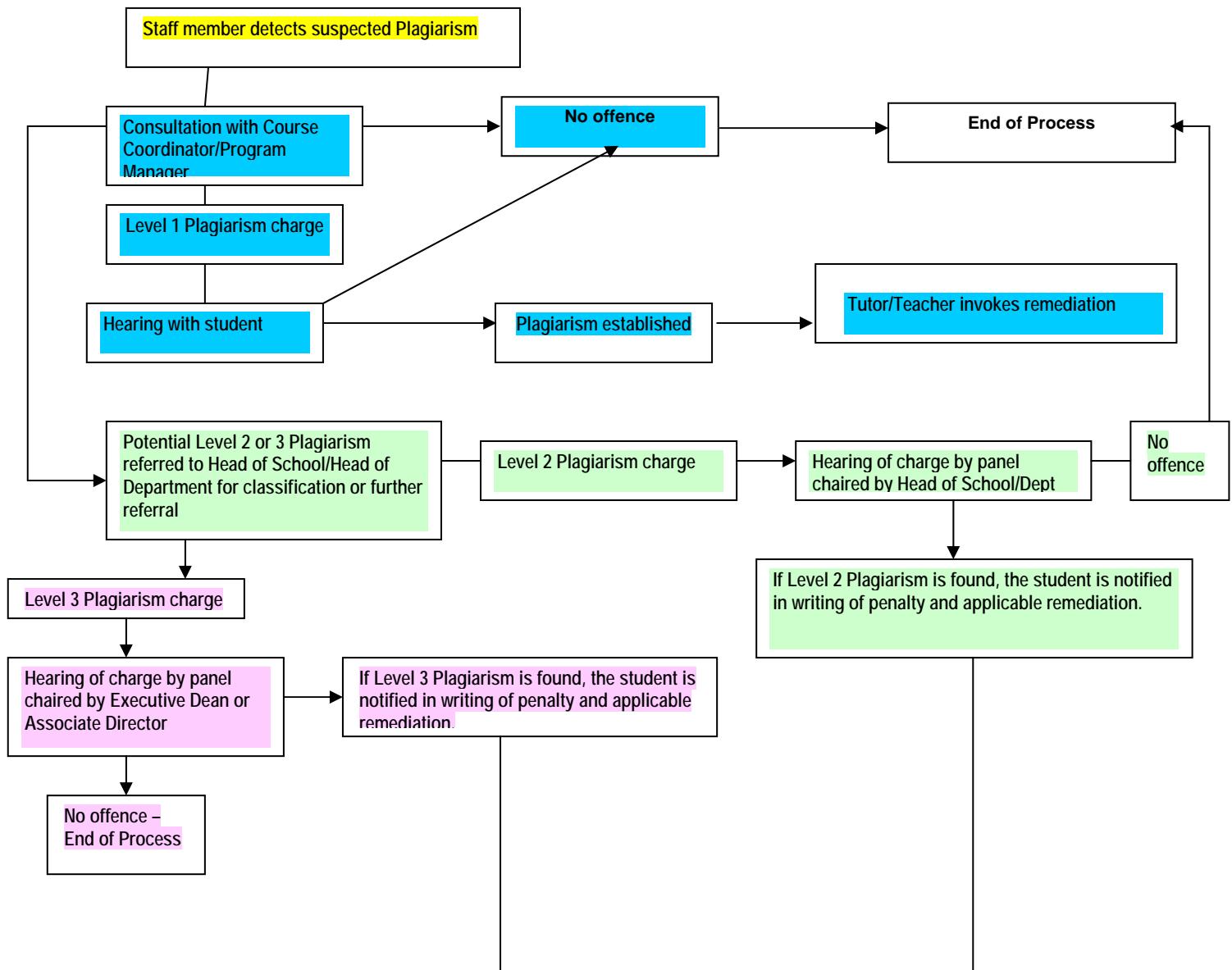
Name of Executive Dean/Dean/ Executive Director

cc. Department of Student Services – Central Database of Plagiarism, Academic Misconduct and Disciplinary Offences

## ATTACHMENT 7 - Process for the Management of Allegations of Plagiarism by PG Research Students



## ATTACHMENT 8 - Process for the Management of Allegations of Plagiarism by Students (Other than PG Research Students)



### APPEALS (ON PROCESS ONLY)

#### Students

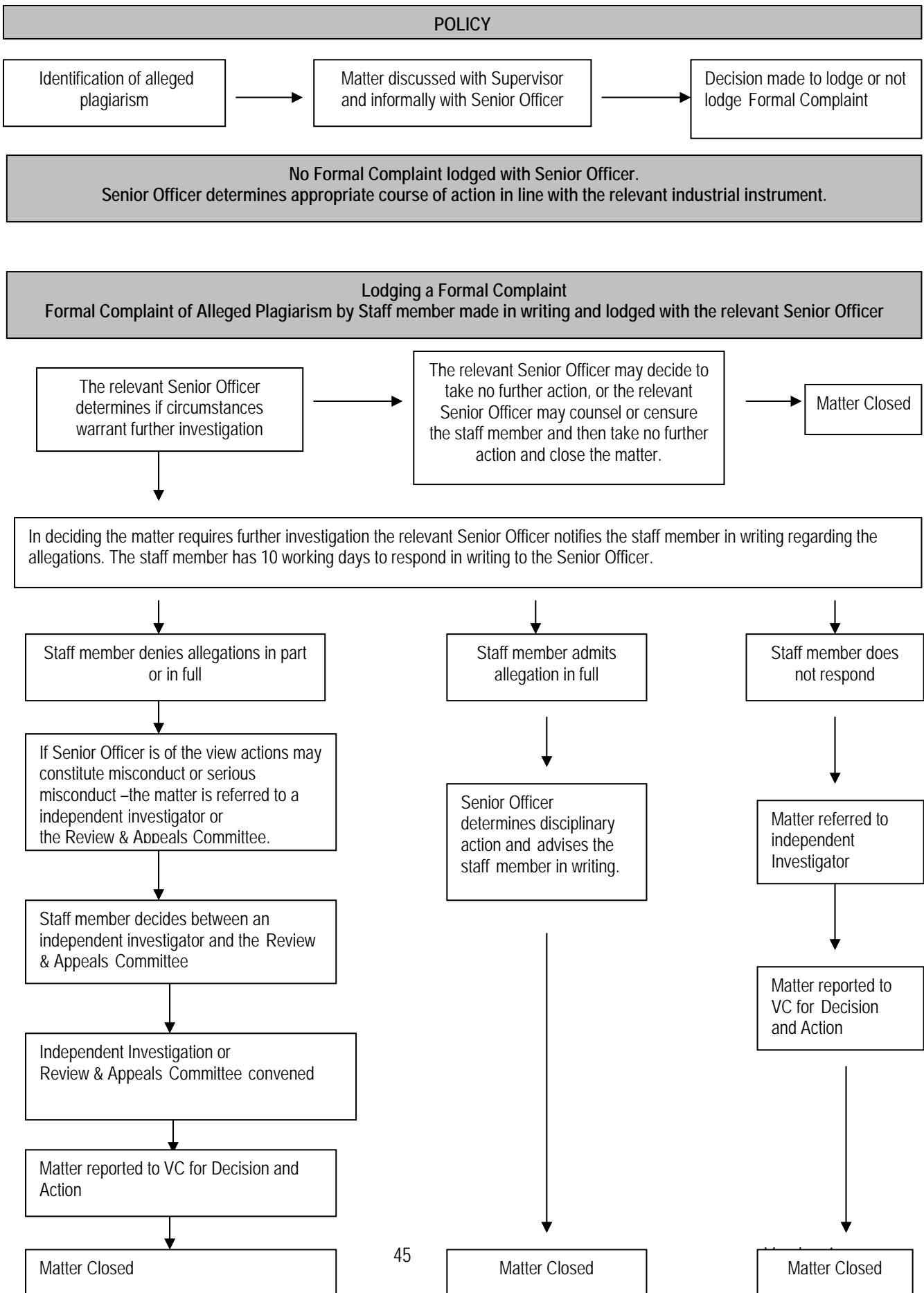
1. The student is able to appeal the finding or penalty to the Discipline Committee if he/she feels the process was unfair;
2. Any student who has referred an allegation of academic misconduct covered by the policy to a member of staff and that in turn is not found, can appeal for a review of this finding to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education Programs) and Director of TAFE.

#### Staff

1. A staff member can appeal a level 2 or 3 decision to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education Programs) and Director of TAFE, if he/she feels the decision did not conform to the policy.

## ATTACHMENT 9 - Process for the Management of Plagiarism by Staff

### Allegations originating from within the University



## ATTACHMENT 10 – STRATEGIES FOR MINIMISING PLAGIARISM

### Teaching and Learning Support information sheet

#### How to Support Students to Value Academic Honesty and Avoid Plagiarism

**NB:** A fuller treatment of these issues can be accessed in the Australian Universities Teaching Committee's *Minimising Plagiarism*, available at <http://www.cshe.unimelb.edu.au/assessinglearning/03/plagMain.html> and also at <http://tls.vu.edu.au/SLS/slur/ReadingWriting/Plagiarism/Plagiarism.htm>. The University of South Australia also has an excellent on-line workshop for students at -

<http://www.unisanet.unisa.edu.au/learn/LearningConnection/?PATH=/Resources/workshop%2Dplagiarism/Plagiarism+Online+Resource/&default=welcome.htm>

#### A. Teaching precepts

1. Material, including a student guide, on plagiarism should be provided to students in all TAFE courses and HE subjects except:

where students are working at a lower level of literacy. In this context, location of relevant information may be the goal, not an expression of understanding. This needs to be flagged in the task instructions e.g. 'locate', 'copy out'.

where learning exercises are intended to scaffold students into understanding and expressing ideas, and students are encouraged to copy given language as the basis of a response. This is legitimate but also needs to be transparent.

2. Explicit teaching aimed to improve students' ability to use information from other sources should occur at multiple points during a course (that is not only at 1<sup>st</sup> year or in a particular subject/module).
3. Responses (feedback & other) to students' work must encourage students' attempts to paraphrase in a way that shows their understanding of material.
4. All materials handed out to students, including subject guides, etc. should correctly and adequately use the system recommended for students.
5. Marking guides should include clear criteria in relation to citation appropriate to the year level or workplace (see Training Packages).
6. Assessment tasks should be designed to minimise the opportunity and incentive for plagiarism.

#### B. Developing the Guide for Students

It is expected that a guide explaining plagiarism will be provided to students in all TAFE courses and HE subjects where plagiarism is a possible response to the assessment task.

The following checklist may be useful for the development of a student guide:

1. Does the guide provide a clear definition of plagiarism? An example might be:

##### Definition

- Copying words or ideas from someone else without giving credit (that is without referencing appropriately).
- Handing in someone else's (or another author's) work as your own.
- Consistently failing to put quotation marks around a quotation.

2. Does it provide a reason why plagiarism is unacceptable in this cultural context?

For example:

Avoiding plagiarism through appropriate referencing is important because it shows that you have researched, that you can comment on the research of others and that you can observe the academic conventions of your discipline.

3. Does it spell out the consequences of plagiarism? *Excerpt from policy??*

4. Does it provide examples relevant to the discipline including, where appropriate, an original passage and examples of acceptable and unacceptable paraphrasing of text? (see Attachment 1 for an example from Accounting)

5. Is it clear about which referencing system is to be used?

For example:

As a basic guide to the Harvard system, the handout from the library could be provided/referred to but a complete guide, with examples, should be made available for more complex queries.

6. Does it provide additional links to resources such as student websites which discuss issues of plagiarism? Does it provide students with practice tasks to develop the skills needed to avoid it?

See also 'Minimising Plagiarism' on the Australian Universities Teaching Committee website:

<http://www.autc.gov.au/projects/completed/learning.pdf>

or at the Centre for the Study of Higher Education website

<http://www.cshe.unimelb.edu.au/assessinglearning/03/plagMain.html>

## Student Handout 1

This handout is designed as a short, clear and educative model for a student guide. Please modify as appropriate.

### How to avoid plagiarism

A good introduction to Plagiarism and strategies for avoiding plagiarism is provided through the on-line workshop at the University of South Australia. Take some time to work through the activities on the link provided-

<http://www.unisanet.unisa.edu.au/learningconnection/student/a-z/quick-find.asp>

#### Including material from your reading in your essay

There are several ways of including material from your reading in your essay. The most common ones are **direct quotation, paraphrase and summary**.

The most important thing to remember is that **use of material from your sources must be referenced**. This means that you must tell the reader where you found the material. Even if you have only used an idea, and you have written about it completely in your own words, it must be referenced. If you do not do this, you are implying that the idea or words are yours, and this is called **plagiarism**. Plagiarism is considered a very serious academic 'crime'!

Many students do not know what a direct quotation is.

When you use the **exact words** from a source such as a book or article, you are using a **direct quotation**. Direct quotations should be carefully selected and copied exactly from the text/article. They should be used only when:

You may wish to modify the 10% maximum.

- the original words of the author are expressed so concisely and aptly that it would be impossible to adequately write them in your own words
- you want to use a specific word or phrase that the author uses to express a central concept
- you are giving a specific description or definition
- you are stating the law or a particular regulation etc

Many do not know the rules about changes in quotes – they may need to be taught this.

#### Direct Quotations

Use direct quotations carefully. They should constitute **no more than 10%** of the words of your essay. Do not use them to make your points, but to support them. Reference all direct quotations and use the correct method to present them. This means:

Many do not know technical terms like 'inverted commas'.

You may wish to modify the 90% minimum.

inverted commas (") if the quotation is three lines or less, or indentation (highlight the quotation and click on INCREASE INDENT) if it is more than three lines long.

#### Paraphrase and Summary

Students may need computing instructions, too.

If you do not use a direct quotation, you should paraphrase or summarise the writer's words. In this process, **you must change 90% of the words**. If you use whole phrases that are the same as the writer's without showing they are direct quotations by using inverted commas (") or indentation, you will be accused of **plagiarism**. To avoid plagiarism, you must also reference the source of the ideas **even if they are rewritten in your own words**.

Many students worry that their written work will be too full of referencing brackets. Don't worry – it's normal for academic writing to look like that! See below for examples of what a mixture of direct quotation, paraphrase and summary might look like.

*"The current official version of this policy is maintained on the Victoria University Central Policy Register and downloading and printing of this policy will produce an uncontrolled copy which may not be current."*

## **REFERENCING AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

The University's Guide to citation and referencing conventions on the URL provided should also be highlighted to students-

<http://w2.vu.edu.au/library/infolink/webref/style.htm>

## Student Handout 2

How much do you have to change a piece of writing to avoid plagiarism?

Study this example:

### Original passage

Historical cost is the most prevalent measurement base used in accounting practice. However the historical cost principle is not followed too rigidly by accountants. For example, it is conventional for inventories to be carried at the lower of cost and net realisable value; marketable securities are often carried at market value and pension liabilities are carried at their present value. In Australia, Approved Accounting Standard AASB 1010, 'Accounting for the Revaluation of Non-current Assets', encourages companies to revalue their non-current assets on a regular basis. Hence, the system of measurement used in Australia is sometimes referred to as 'modified historical cost'.

### Paraphrase 1

*The most common way of measuring that accountants use is historical cost. But the principle of historical cost is not closely followed in all situations in practice. In the case of inventories, for example, the lower of cost and net realisable value is normally used; marketable securities are frequently carried at market value and pension liabilities are carried at their present value. Companies in Australia are encouraged to revalue their non-current assets on a regular basis by Approved Accounting Standard AASB 1010, 'Accounting for the Revaluation of Non-current Assets'. Therefore, the Australian system of measurement is sometimes called 'modified historical cost'.*

Comment:

This passage **would** be considered plagiarism for two reasons:

- The writer has only changed around a few words and phrases, or changed the order of sentences
- No referencing has been provided to give the source for any of the information.

### Paraphrase 2

*The Australian system of measurement is sometimes called 'modified historical cost'. It is based on the most common measurement base, historical cost. However As Carnegie et al (1999) note, the Australian accounting system departs from pure historical cost in several ways. For example in Australia, 'the lower of cost and net realisable value' (Carnegie et al 1999, p. 527) is normally used for inventories; market value is frequently used for marketable securities and present value is used for pension liabilities. A further factor that modifies the historical cost principle in the Australian accounting system is the fact that companies in this country are encouraged to regularly revalue their non-current assets by Approved Accounting Standard AASB 1010, 'Accounting for the Revaluation of Non-current Assets' (Carnegie et al 1999, p. 527).*

Comment:

This passage **would not** be considered plagiarism because:

- The writer has rewritten the information in their own words enough for the reader to see that it has been understood.
- Referencing is used to indicate the source of the information. When the exact words of the original passage are used, the writer has followed the rules for quoting, except in the case of technical terms.