

STUDENT ACADEMIC INTEGRITY REGULATIONS

These Regulations should be read in conjunction with the Ordinance to Provide for Discipline of Students, the Regulations Governing Student Conduct, and the USP Copyright Compliance Guidelines.

1.0 WHAT IS ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT?

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

(b) All written work submitted for a course, except for acknowledged quotations, must be expressed in the student's own words, with proper referencing of borrowed ideas. Students must not submit coursework that has been completed dishonestly using any of the dishonest practices described in clauses 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3.

(c) Where a member of academic staff has reasonable grounds to believe that a student is guilty of academic dishonesty in coursework, assignments, research theses or examinations, one or more of the penalties detailed in clause 3.0 may be imposed.

(d) Academic misconduct includes plagiarism, collusion and cheating when preparing coursework, assignments, research theses or sitting an examination.

(e) USP does not condone academic dishonesty and misconduct.

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

(g) The Academic Misconduct Regulations contained in the USP Handbook and Calendar provide the framework for the treatment of plagiarism and dishonest practice in academic work within the University.

1.1 Plagiarism

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

(b) Plagiarism includes:

(i) Copying of the published or unpublished works of another writer without acknowledging the source using acceptable reference citation methods

(ii) Lifting or cutting and pasting extracts from other material, without quotation marks and appropriate acknowledgement of sources.

(iii) Paraphrasing of content and ideas without proper acknowledgement of the source.

(iv) The use of images, diagrams, photographs and material from any source, including blogs and social networks, without acknowledgement.

(v) Copying part or all of one's own or another student's assignment. In this instance, 'student assignment' refers to a piece of academic work submitted for assessment purposes for any course, in past or current years at any educational institutional including USP or any other university

1.2 Cheating

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

(b) Cheating includes:

- (i) Doing anything to gain an unfair or illicit academic advantage in any assessment or examination;
- (ii) Possessing, referring to or having access to any material (including internet resources, 'crib' notes, or electronic files) containing information directly or indirectly related to the subject matter under examination, other than what is explicitly approved for examination purposes;
- (iii) Using a mobile phone to communicate with any other student or person inside or outside the examination venue;
- (iv) Copying from another student in a test or examination, or enabling another student to cheat in a test or examination;
- (v) Soliciting a person to sit a test or final examination in place of the student enrolled, or sitting a test or final examination in the place of another student;
- (vi) Manipulation of scores in tests or examination or in any other form of assessment;
- (vii) Enabling another student in any of the above.

1.3 Collusion

- (a) Collusion means working with someone else to deceive or mislead to gain an unfair academic advantage.
- (b) Collusion includes:
 - (i) Submission of a paper that has been fully or partially written by an author other than the author credited for that piece of work. This includes the use of paid services of a student, or any other person who has been solicited for that purpose.
 - (ii) Facilitating or enabling another student to plagiarise or cheat in any way.
- (c) It is every student's responsibility to ensure that their work is stored securely and that no other student has access to their notes, assignments, or any other form of academic work. If two students submit substantially similar work, it shall be treated as collusion by both parties, regardless of which student may be the original author.

2.0 PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

2.1 Plagiarism or Collusion

- (a) When a marker suspects a student of plagiarism or collusion, the piece of academic work must be brought to the attention of the Course Coordinator concerned.
- (b) The Course Coordinator will endeavour to locate the sources from which this student has plagiarised or colluded. If satisfied that the student has plagiarised, the Course Coordinator will retain evidence of the breach, including a copy of the academic work and a list of sources, page numbers and/or copies of the plagiarised sources, plus any relevant Turnitin report(s).
- (c) The Course Coordinator may penalise the student as per provisions 3.0 (a) (i) and/or (ii), below. The Course Coordinator must specify the grounds for any such penalty to the student in writing, by email, letter, or via Moodle.
- (d) If the Course Coordinator wishes to recommend that the student be penalised as per provisions 3.0 (a) (iii), (iv) or (v), below, s/he will submit all evidence to the Head of Academic Unit within 21 days of the submission of the assignment. If the Head of Academic Unit is satisfied that the student has engaged knowingly in the act of academic misconduct, s/he may implement one or more of the penalties specified under the provisions of 3.0, below.

2.2 Cheating

- (a) A student who is found in breach of the rules and regulations of an assessment task shall be answerable initially to the Course Coordinator. The supervisor of the activity shall remove the student from the assessment task at the point of discovery and make a written complaint to the Course Coordinator.

(b) The Course Coordinator may penalise the student as per the procedures described in 2.1, above.

2.3 Mandatory use of Turnitin (Similarity Index Software)

(a) Students are required to submit all written work to Moodle through Turnitin, a programme that assesses the originality of student work by comparing it for similarity against a wide range of sources. Turnitin currently accepts the following file types for upload:

Microsoft Word (DOC and DOCX),
Corel WordPerfect, HTML,
Adobe PostScript, Plain text (TXT),
Rich Text Format (RTF),
Portable Document Format (PDF),
OpenOffice (ODT),
Hangul (HWP),
PowerPoint (PPT)

(b) Students are actively encouraged to use Turnitin ahead of the assignment deadline, to check drafts of their written work, to improve their writing, and to guard against unintentional plagiarism.

(c) Turnitin produces a similarity index for every submitted assignment, which estimates the percentage of a given assignment that has been adapted from elsewhere without adequate citation. The marker will review the Turnitin report alongside the assignment, to assist in the identification of plagiarised or colluded material.

(d) The Turnitin report is a tool to help students guard against poor citation and unintentional plagiarism, and to help markers identify plagiarised or colluded material. A high similarity index (>10-20%) is an indicator of possible academic misconduct, but it is up to the marker to determine whether or not an assignment contains plagiarised or colluded material. An assignment with a low similarity index may still be found to include plagiarised or colluded material, and an assignment with a high similarity index may in some instances not indicate academic misconduct.

(e) Any attempt to cheat Turnitin, including the disguising of plagiarised content by paraphrase, synonyms, or the use of special characters, may be taken as evidence of deliberate academic misconduct.

(f) If the marker finds evidence of academic misconduct, regardless of the exact Turnitin similarity index, s/he may follow the penalty procedures described in 2.1, above.

3.0 Penalties for Academic Misconduct

(a) The penalties imposed for proven cases of misconduct vary. Based on the seriousness of the case, the penalties include, but are not limited to:

(i) The deduction of some or all of the available marks for the assignment in question, by the Course Coordinator;

(ii) The requirement by the Course Coordinator that the student complete further work, or repeat work, for the course.

(iii) A written reprimand of the student from the Head of Academic Unit;

(iv) Deprivation of credit for the course to which the academic misconduct relates, by the Head of Academic Unit;

(v) Cancellation of any previously credited pass in a course associated with the offence, by the Head of Academic Unit.

(b) Significant and repeat offences will be referred to the University's Student Discipline Committee, which can:

(i) Impose a fine not exceeding FJ\$500 (or equivalent in local currency);

- (ii) Prohibit the student from using any of the University's library and computing network facilities for a period not exceeding twenty-eight days;
 - (iii) Recommend to the Vice-Chancellor & President that a student's enrolment be suspended for any period and on terms considered necessary by the Committee;
 - (iv) Recommend to the Vice-Chancellor & President that the student's enrolment be cancelled, i.e. expulsion from the University.
- (c) It is the responsibility of the penalising agent—i.e. the Course Coordinator, Head of Academic Unit, or Student Discipline Committee—to lodge the finding in the Register of Deliberate Academic Misconduct, as per 4.0, below.

4.0 Register of Deliberate Academic Misconduct

- (a) When a finding of misconduct is made against a student, this finding is recorded on his/her student record and in a Register of Deliberate Academic Misconduct, maintained by Student Academic Services.
- (i) A Register of Deliberate Academic Misconduct records the details of all cases where students have been proven to have engaged in deliberate academic misconduct in their coursework and/or examinations, and have received an academic penalty as a result;
 - (ii) Details of each case are recorded on a paper form, which includes a student declaration, and the student receives a copy of the completed and signed form once the case is closed. Information from the form is then entered into the electronic Register;
 - (iii) After a deliberate offence is confirmed, the Register will be consulted to assist in determination of an appropriate penalty. The Register will be able to identify repeat offenders, with the risk that these students will receive more severe penalties for repeat offences;
 - (iv) Use of the Register is covered by strict protocols. Staff access is limited to authorised users only, and there is no student access. The record of offence will normally remain in the Register until one year after the student graduates.
- (b) Students are permitted to apply for a review of any academic penalty to the Student Discipline Committee or, if the penalty has been imposed by the Student Discipline Committee itself, to an ad hoc committee of the Student Discipline Appeals Committee.

CODE OF ACADEMIC HONESTY

Students are expected to read the USP Student Academic Integrity Regulations before they resign, online, the University Code of Academic Honesty.

Every student enrolled in any course or programme offered by USP is required to sign the University Code of Academic Honesty prior to commencing his/her first course and comply with the rules and regulations of the University as contained in the Official USP Handbook and Calendar.

It is the policy of The University of the South Pacific to penalise students who are proven to use dishonest practices in carrying out their academic coursework and examinations.

The signing of the University Code of Academic Honesty by all students serves as a deterrent to academic misconduct and will guide staff on the procedures by which students found engaging in such activities may be dealt with, in line with the guiding rules and regulations of the University.

THE UNIVERSITY OF THE SOUTH PACIFIC CODE OF ACADEMIC HONESTY

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

I declare that I have read and understood the USP Student Academic Integrity Regulations and;

I agree to abide fully by the USP Academic Integrity Regulations, and accept full responsibility should it be deemed that I have violated this policy.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Student ID#: _____

Date: _____