

# Complaint Process for Plagiarism and Cheating



## Preliminary Process

A staff member can get preliminary advice about a suspicion of academic misconduct from their Chairperson of Department, Dean, the Chairperson of the Student Discipline Committee (Roger Moltzen), the Academic Integrity Advisor and Secretary to the Student Discipline Committee (Cherie Cartwright), the Director of the Academic Office, or other divisional directors.

Māori students can have their complaint addressed through a tikanga process, as outlined in section 13 of the Student Discipline Regulations (*University of Waikato Calendar*).

## Making a Complaint

The following process is provided to assist staff with making a complaint of academic misconduct. Please feel free to contact the Academic Integrity Advisor, Cherie Cartwright, if you have any questions about this process.

*Please note:*

- Please use the link provided on this webpage to make your complaint. Be sure to include copies of all documents/information. Your complaint will be received by the Academic Integrity Advisor.
- A copy of the complaint and all materials used in making a decision about the misconduct are given to the student so word any memos and other materials appropriately.
- Only information that is verifiable can be used as evidence – suspicions and previous behaviour that has not been documented is not accepted as evidence of misconduct and do not need to be included in the complaint.
- A memo template (in Word) is provided on the webpage as another option for making your complaint. You may amend to suit your circumstances.
- All processes and decisions under the Student Discipline Regulations are confidential to the parties involved.

## Academic Misconduct

**Plagiarism** means presenting as one's own work the work of another, and includes:

- Copying any material such as phrases, words, music, pictures, computer code and ideas from sources such as books, journals, websites, handouts, class notes, student's assignments, and submitting that copied information as their own work without acknowledgment and attribution
- Working with other students or people to jointly answer assessment tasks and submitting that joint material as their own individual work without acknowledgement of others' contribution

**Cheating** is not specifically defined in the regulations to prevent students from finding a method that is not covered. Cheating includes but is not limited to:

- Copying from another student during a test or examination and submitting that copied information as their own work or allowing another student to copy their own work
- Giving another student a copy of their own or someone else's assessment or assessment materials or writing such assessment materials
- Assisting another student with assessment items when such assistance is not permitted
- Fabricating or falsifying data for assessment
- Purchasing assessments or assessment materials and submitting as their own work
- Selling assessments to other students
- Submitting the same, or substantially the same previously marked assessment item for assessment in the same or another course without permission
- Impersonating another person for assessment credit

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- Claiming special consideration when circumstances do not justify such a claim
- Forging documents for special consideration or for other advantage in assessment
- Taking cheat notes or any other information into a test or examination without permission
- Using electronic items such as cell phones, dictionaries, palm pads etc to access information to answer questions during tests or examinations

## Evidence of Misconduct - Plagiarism

1. Most student work will have gone through Turnitin, so a similarity report should be attached when submitting the complaint. However, if you have not used Turnitin, please use the following guidelines:
  - a. Mark up the plagiarism on either the original or a copy of the assessment item – if highlighting please use pink or green so it can be photocopied – a copy is given to student and Student Discipline Committee members.
  - b. If there are substantial passages, indicate with a line down the side or start and end markers. Please identify all plagiarised material throughout the assignment – this can have a significant impact on the penalty given.
  - c. Cross reference identified passages to the source articles/website/book etc
  - d. Provide copies of source materials, fully cross referenced to the assessment item.
2. If it will help, please provide copy of interview notes if lecturer or other staff have spoken to the student. Also emails if relevant.
3. You may also provide any other relevant material – such as information sessions in class on plagiarism/ referencing, writing exercises etc that could be relevant to the student's expected knowledge and/or skill.
4. If you are aware of a previous incident of plagiarism please do NOT mention it in the complaint. The Committee will be advised once misconduct is found but it is not admissible before that point.
5. Include a copy of the paper outline and if relevant the assessment guidelines.

## Evidence of Misconduct - Cheating

1. On the original or a copy of the assessment item, indicate where cheating has occurred – if highlighting please use pink or green so it can be photocopied – a copy is given to student and Student Discipline Committee members.
2. Provide the crib notes or other evidence, cross referenced to the assessment item if possible or relevant.
3. Provide a copy of interview notes if lecturer or other staff have spoken to the student. Ditto emails.
4. Provide a copy of testimony from other staff or students who witnessed the cheating. Anonymous evidence will not be accepted.
5. Any other relevant material – such as information sessions in class etc that could be relevant to the student's expected knowledge and/or skill.
6. If you are aware of a previous incident of plagiarism please do NOT mention it in the complaint. The Committee will be advised once misconduct is found but it is not admissible before that point.
7. Include a copy of the paper outline and if relevant the assessment guidelines.

## Managing the Student and the Grade until the Complaint is Resolved

It is important to enter a non-grade in the posted or recorded results to identify that there is no finalised grade. Enter zero, AR (awaiting results) or any such entry that is used by your Department or School to show that the grade is not finalised.

Once you have decided to make a complaint of academic misconduct you can contact the student and advise them of the process being followed if you wish. The Academic Integrity Advisor, Cherie Cartwright, is available to discuss procedures with the student and you may give the student her email or phone number.

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## Further Resources

Staff interested in designing assessment items that are less vulnerable to plagiarism and collusion may obtain assistance from Student Learning (SL).

## Want more information?

Contact the Academic Integrity Advisor:

Academic Integrity Advisor  
Academic Office  
University of Waikato  
Private Bag 3105  
Hamilton 3240, New Zealand

Phone: +64 7 838-4466 ext. 4447  
Email:  
[academic.integrity@waikato.ac.nz](mailto:academic.integrity@waikato.ac.nz)

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## MEMO

To	From
CC	Date
Subject	

I would like to make a formal complaint of [name the misconduct] against [Student name and ID number] for assessment item [name] for the paper [code and name]. This assessment item is worth [% of grade] and it is/is not a required piece of assessment.

[Please add in any comments relevant to the complaint]

Name  
Position

Please find attached:

- a copy of the assessment item/s and relevant material to show misconduct cross referenced.
- a course outline.
- two copies of the relevant Turnitin.com reports (delete if not relevant)
- copies of emails or discussion notes with the student (delete if not relevant)