

Academic Integrity at La Trobe University

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Academic Integrity Journey at La Trobe University

- The academic integrity model has been developed over the last seven years:
 - Academic Board commissions a full review in 2005 and sets up a broad review panel of senior academic staff
 - 2005 – 2006 University-wide consultation including student community
 - 2006 – 2007 policy framework implemented
 - 2008 – 2009 further broad review of University Statute includes changes to decision making procedures and appeals
 - 2009 – 2012 Framework fully in place and operating well
 - 2012 – 2013 revised University Statute to be approved
 - Revised Statute builds upon education /skills development and counselling interventions in decision makers' available options, increased penalties for egregious misconduct, provides for broader committee decision making.

Access

- Academic Integrity Website.
<http://www.latrobe.edu.au/students/learning/academic-integrity>
- Easy to access from Student's web access to La Trobe University Policies site.
- Downloadable Statute, Policy, Procedures and Guidelines.
- Links provided from Academic Integrity site, University Handbook and documents sent to students.
- Resources developed by the Library/Academic Language and Learning Unit:
 - To prepare students for University – Skills Essentials -
<http://tlweb.latrobe.edu.au/ctlc/allu/skills-essentials/referencing.php>
 - About the conventions of acknowledgement (a suite of resources, ARM, ART and the AIM program) - <http://tlweb.latrobe.edu.au/ctlc/allu/skills-essentials/referencing.php>

Approach

- Multi layered policy framework - Statute, Policy, Procedures, Guidelines, student declarations (detailed flowcharts are available).
- Academic Integrity introduction and explanation – Faculties, course materials, course and lecturer’s statements.
- Academic Integrity training for all commencing staff (voluntary).
- Academic Integrity Module required – first year undergraduate students:
 - Teaches LTU values, standards and rules
 - Must be passed and is placed on student’s academic record
 - Assessed for academic progression
 - AIM is an introduction and clears space for staff teaching about the discipline conventions in particular subjects.
- AIM is now available to postgraduate (coursework) students on request (currently being trialled in one Faculty).
- Research Ethics and Integrity Unit provides Academic Integrity services to higher degree research students.

Responsibilities

- Multi Policy documents lay out University, Staff, Student responsibilities and expectations.
- Students submit work hard-copy with a signed declaration that:
 - They have read and understood the University's pronouncements regarding academic integrity;
 - The work is their own and it has not been submitted previously; and
 - An acknowledgement that the University has a right to reproduce/communicate the work for the purposes of detecting plagiarism (through Turnitin).
- Students who submit work electronically through the Learning Management System must acknowledge a similar statement before access to submit is permitted.
- Students may self-check work in Turnitin.

Detail #1

- Statute, Policy and Procedures contain standard terminology and definitions.
- There are two clear processes for centrally administered examinations and also assessments conducted by Faculties.
- Defined processes for each of above leading to a common evaluation by Heads of Academic Divisions – (HOAD) decides:
 - No case to answer
 - If a minor offence (HOAD deals with minor offences)
 - If a serious offence – referral to Faculty Academic Misconduct Officer.
- There are defined powers and levels of penalties for decision makers.
- Suite of standard template letters, revised each semester:
 - Provides a standard for all layers of decision making and processes
 - Provide consistent statements of rights and responsibilities
 - Includes information compliant with administrative law and natural justice
 - allegations, evidence, reasons for decisions, appeals, complaints, assistance and other information.

Detail #2

- Recording and monitoring:
 - All cases are recorded on a daily basis in a confidential section of the Student Information System (SIS).
 - All documents are received by Academic Services and filed electronically in a confidential section of the students' files (in TRIM).
 - No case to answer decisions not recorded but documents are filed.
 - All cases and documents are monitored on a daily basis to ensure correct processes are followed.
 - Advice and recommendations are provided to decision makers on an individual basis.
 - Complaints by students about academic integrity defined processes may be made in sequence to :
 - the internal La Trobe University Ombudsman;
 - the Ombudsman of Victoria (external).

Detail #3

- Reporting - an annual academic misconduct report is made to Education Committee and Academic Board.
- The report includes the year's data with five year rolling comparative data.
- The report contains commentary and analyses:
 - Covering segmentation of misconduct by Faculties, misconduct type and penalties
 - Identification and analyses of trends and spikes
 - Identification of misconduct by student populations for
 - undergraduate students;
 - higher degree by coursework;
 - higher degree research students; and
 - domestic and international students misconduct
 - Appeals Committee summaries, outcomes and recommendations
- Other matters noted - Multiple offences, essay mills, contract assignments.

Support

- Support, advice and training:
 - Policy and process advice is made available on a daily basis to Heads of Academic Divisions, staff, students and student advocates on individual or group bases – by telephone, email or drop-in or visit at their location
 - Academic Services provides formal training sessions to decision makers and academic staff and also process administrators
 - Training is always conducted across all Faculties where there have been legislative or policy changes
 - Where a significant anomaly is detected, the Policy and Compliance Unit contacts academic leaders (Associate Deans, etc.) of emergent issues
 - International leading academics in academic integrity provide workshops key decision makers and administrators (e.g., ethical approach)
 - The Policy and Compliance Unit provides individual training and Committee policy advice to University Appeals Committee members.
 - La Trobe's approach includes different student modules for different purposes. AIM deals with integrity and being honest in using our own and others' work at La Trobe. ARM focuses on why we reference, and ART gives examples of and the rules for how to cite.

Conclusion

- La Trobe University's approach includes
 - broad consultation and evaluation of feedback
 - regular review and accepting change
 - Emphasis on reinforcing the University's values and academic integrity objectives



Handout materials are available

Thank you