Student academic integrity: An introduction

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Introducing academic integrity at SCU

All Australian universities identify academic integrity as central to good scholarship. At SCU researchers, teachers, and students are all expected to practice academic integrity by acting honestly and fairly when they engage in learning, research and creative activities.

At this university, academic integrity is defined as:

*the application of the belief that honesty is at the core of exemplary scholarship. It is embodied in the scrupulous acknowledgment of the work of others in research, academic activities, in other creative endeavours and in the production and reproduction of knowledge* (Southern Cross University, n.d.a).

Three important elements of academic integrity are emphasised in this definition.

**First:** academic integrity is essential to ‘exemplary scholarship’, or high standards of learning, research, and creative activity.

**Second:** academic integrity is a practice, or a way of doing study, research, and creative activities that applies a belief in honesty by always ‘scrupulously’ showing when others’ work is used. This means doing study, research or creative activities in a way that:

• **always** carefully shows when others’ work is used
• **never** claims credit for others’ work.

**Third:** at university, practising academic integrity is taken very seriously because it is understood as acting with fairness and honesty while studying, researching, or engaging in creative activities.
• Clearly showing when we use others’ work is a way to act **fairly** towards the authors who created the work in the first place. We act **fairly** by giving credit to the authors and artists who created the works we use.

• Carefully showing where our work ends, and the work of others begins is understood as acting **honestly**. At university, acting honestly involves **only** taking credit for the work you completed yourself.

Practising academic integrity is all about acknowledging when we use other’s work, and **only** taking credit for work we create ourselves. At university a very specific method, called referencing, is used to show when ideas, information, examples, words or images from sources are referred to in assignments.

**Where do students mainly practise academic integrity?**

Students are expected to practise academic integrity while studying at SCU. This includes when students are learning, researching, and engaging in creative activities. However, the main place where students practise academic integrity is **assessment**.

Put simply, students practise academic integrity by submitting their own work for assessment by:

- putting in the effort required to complete assignments and exams
- using referencing to show when they do use others’ work in assignments and exams.

Depending on course of study, the types of assessment completed by SCU students varies. No matter the type of assessment task, you will be expected to practise academic integrity.

Detailed information about academic integrity can found in the Academic Integrity Policy (Southern Cross University, n.d.b). All students are expected to read this document. Make sure you put aside at least 30 minutes to carefully read this policy at the start of study. It is important to consult with your teacher if you have any questions about how to practise academic integrity in your course.

**Related Quick Guides**

Student academic misconduct: An introduction, Student academic integrity: Know your rights and responsibilities

**References**
