**Parent** Guide: AI and Academic Integrity

BSSS

# Contents

# Introduction

The Office of the BSSS has collated our 2023 published work on academic integrity for parents into this paper. For more advice about academic integrity, [see the BSSS Website](). It is important to note that academic integrity and plagiarism are not confined to AI.

# AI and Plagiarism

A key question underlying academic integrity in education and AI is:

> Is the use of AI going to affect the validity of the teacher's measurement of the construct being assessed?

Or, more plainly: what knowledge and skills are being assessed and will the use of AI interfere with the student's learning *and* their ability to demonstrate their learning in a way that is fair – both to the student and to their classmates. If students use AI in ways that misrepresent their learning, that's a problem for equity and for learning outcome. In these situations, teachers and schools will apply the BSSS Academic Integrity Policy.

In the companion student guide, we have asked students to note that this is why teachers, schools, and the BSSS do not accept arguments like "I generated it, so it's my work" or "AI isn't a person, so it's not plagiarism". We all want to see what students can achieve; what skills they have learned and what skills they still need to work on. Generated content won't help us to see that. This is why the BSSS has amended academic integrity policies to make sure it is clear that the **unattributed or disallowed use of AI in assessment is a breach of academic integrity and will be subject to penalties in the ACT Senior Secondary System.**

Preventing plagiarism is everyone's responsibility. We know that students may be unused to needing to keep information, undertake validation tasks, or be queried without the hyper-accurate text matching of traditional detectors. The message from the Office of the BSSS is that asking for drafts, setting validation tasks, and querying potential plagiarism are all ways that teachers are dealing with the use of AI while keeping things fair for everyone.

# BSSS Academic Integrity – Policy

## Definition: Academic Integrity

The principle that students' work is genuine and original, completed only with the assistance allowed according to the rules, policies, and guidelines. In particular, the words, ideas, scholarship, and intellectual property of others used in the work must be appropriately acknowledged.

Work includes not only written material, but in addition any oral, numerical, audio, visual or other material submitted for assessment.

Breaches of academic integrity include plagiarism, collusion, the fabrication or deliberate misrepresentation of data, and failure to adhere to the rules regarding examinations in such a way as to gain unfair academic advantage[1].

## Plagiarism – from the BSSS Policy and Procedures Manual 4.3.12

Plagiarism is the copying, paraphrasing, or summarising of work, in any form, without acknowledgement of sources, and presenting this as a student's own work.

## Purpose

The purpose of a plagiarism policy is as follows:

- Students know the satisfaction of producing their own work

- Students take full advantage of the learning process

- Students acknowledge the work of others

- Students understand the ethical rights and responsibilities as authors and creators

- Students are aware of how to use information respectfully, ethically, and legally when complying with intellectual academic writing practices (UTS: Library Information Literacy Framework) and all areas of the curriculum

## Examples of plagiarism could include, but are not limited to[2]:

- Submitting all or part of another person's work with or without that person's knowledge

- Using AI generative software to substantially research, plan, structure and/or create the text/ image/ artwork. Submitting all or part of a paper from a source text without proper acknowledgement

- Copying part of another person's work from a source text, supplying proper acknowledgement, but leaving out quotation marks or not using italics

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[1] The Australian National University Academic honesty and Plagiarism, viewed 15/11/18
http://www.anu.edu.au/students/program-administration/assessments-exams/academic-honesty-plagiarism
See also BSSS Policy and Procedures
[2] Examples of plagiarism adapted from: Stephen Wilhoit, College Teaching 42, Fall 1994, 161-164

- Submitting materials that paraphrase or summarise another person's work or ideas without appropriate acknowledgement
- Submitting a digital image, sound, design, artwork, artefact, product, photograph, or animation, altered or unaltered, without appropriate acknowledgement.

## Principles behind the imposition of penalties:

- Any work that is found to be plagiarised will incur a penalty ranging from a written reprimand and warning, through to the cancellation of all assessment results for Years 11 and 12
- Students who unintentionally plagiarise must be given appropriate counselling and guidance so that they do not repeat the offence
- The impact on unit scores of the penalties imposed for serious, and
- Repeated instances of plagiarism will be managed in accordance with the Board of Senior Secondary Studies policies.

Note that in the tertiary sector, plagiarism is immediately treated as a breach of the code of conduct and may lead to loss or units and/or expulsion.

## Procedures for dealing with situations involving plagiarism:

a) Any suspected case of plagiarism must be investigated at the school level

b) The principles of natural justice must be applied at all stages in the process. Any student suspected of plagiarising work must be given a fair hearing and the opportunity to provide evidence of authorship

c) If there is evidence of plagiarism the student must be interviewed by the teacher and the head of faculty and given the opportunity to explain his/her case before a penalty is determined

d) If plagiarism is shown to have occurred, then the teacher, in conjunction with the head of faculty, Principal or Delegate as appropriate, should determine the penalty, including consideration of the principles and the penalty schedule listed

e) The student must be advised, in writing, of the penalty and informed that s/he has the right to appeal the penalty under the Breach of Discipline procedures of the Board

f) Details of any case of plagiarism must be recorded and the record kept centrally at the College.

## Right of Appeal

Students have the right to appeal against the application and/or the outcomes of the above procedures. Refer to Board Policy on Breaches of Discipline in relation to school-based assessment and *Your Rights to Appeal* Leaflet.

# Penalties

Any one or more of the following actions could be taken for a breach of discipline in relation to assessment:

    a)    Reprimand of the candidate, except in cases where the candidate would have derived benefit from such breaches

    b)    The making of alternative arrangements for the assessment (e.g., through a reassessment)

    c)    The assessment marked without the material subject to the breach being considered

    d)    Imposition of a mark penalty appropriate to the extent of the breach

    e)    Cancellation of the result in the particular component of the college assessment concerned

    f)    Cancellation of the total college assessment result in the unit/course concerned

    g)    Cancellation of all the candidate's results for years 11 and 12 in assessments conducted.

The following is a guide to the penalties to be imposed by colleges. These penalties apply irrespective of the unit/subject/course in which the incident(s) occur.

| Categories | Penalties |
| --- | --- |
| First incident of breach of discipline | One or more of the following penalties to be imposed subject to the degree of the infringement: (a) to (f) |
| Subsequent breach(es) of discipline | One of the following penalties to be imposed subject to the degree of the infringement and previous breach(es) of discipline: (b) to (g) |

Counselling of students is a key component of the process. After the first incident of a breach of discipline, advice in writing to the student must include a warning about the consequences of subsequent breaches.

# Using AI in assessments

## Teacher-directed use of AI

Teachers should give advice clearly, in writing, and in line with the ICT policies in the school or sector about what is and is not counted as acceptable use of AI in any specific assessment. Students need to follow the instructions given by the teacher on the assessment task. If a task does not mention AI specifically, assume that is it not permitted.

## To use, or not to use?

The main difference between AI use being penalised or not is whether the use of AI is a substitute for a student's own thinking and technical skills or being used in service of their own thinking. We suggest that students must reference AI use when:

- Any quote or wording taken from AI must be referenced as a direct quote, using the referencing style specified in the assessment sheet.
- Any idea developed through AI must be referenced; for example, if a student asked an AI for five ideas for a story in English and used one of these ideas to create their own short story, they need to reflect on and reference this in their rationale. If a student asked an AI to create a proof of concept in a design, technology, art, or textiles course and then built from that, this should be reflected on and written up as part of their final project.

Uses that are prohibited in assessment tasks unless specifically referred to on the assessment sheet and linked by the teacher to learning outcomes desired in the task:

- Any use of AI to scaffold work or provide a structure that eliminates a student's need to understand the text type or skills they are supposed to demonstrate
- Any use of AI to refine or replace wording (e.g., changing original sentence structures)
- Any unacknowledged use of AI

## The reliability of generative AI as a source: what is its value?

AI's source value – the validity of using an item generated by AI as a scholarly source – is currently quite low. AI tends to make things up, sometimes referred to as an 'hallucination', as well as tending towards being biased depending on the content it has been trained with. It is unlikely that the AI is going to come up with something as a source that is of any greater use to a student than the corresponding Wikipedia, Stack Overflow, or generally 'googleable' source. Referencing AI as a source for facts is not recommend. The use of AI to find source documents is *highly* dependent on the model.

We do not recommend students including sentences or paragraphs written by generative AI, even if it was referenced, **as in all cases it will not increase their mark or grade** (as it is not their work).

## Referencing

Assignment sheets or school policy should clearly explain how AI is to be referenced. We have not specified a particular referencing style, due to the need for different subjects to teach different methods of referencing (e.g., APA, MLA). Generally, one should reference AI as if it is a private conversation. It is a good idea to have students provide transcripts of any AI chats, prompts, or generation sessions used as an appendix to their work, so that any queries about originality can be quickly checked.

## Direct References

These will depend on the model you are using and will change as generative AI becomes a more accepted part of academia. You can find a clear citation guide here from Monash University that covers a number of different referencing styles. We recommend using web-based citation guides as these can be updated as the technology changes.

## Declarations

Where the assignment has permitted the use of generative AI to scaffold or permitted the student to make use of generative AI more substantially, students should provide a written acknowledgement of how generative AI was used in their work.

Monash University suggests the following scaffold:

I acknowledge the use of [insert AI system(s) and link] to [specific use of generative artificial intelligence]. The prompts used include [list of prompts]. The output from these prompts was used to [explain use]

Monash University, 2023

Students should also include links to, or copies of, conversations with the AI that show clearly which elements of the text were original to the student, and which were generated.

# How can parents and carers help students engage with academic integrity?

Most students are honest and ethical. However, breaches of academic integrity are not new and there are some students who share papers, pay tutors or ghost writers, have friends or family write assessments for them, and mix-and-match paraphrase.

No matter whether it is analogue or digital, students presenting plagiarised work as their own is a problem. Parents and carers can help by being knowledgeable about the risks and rewards and helping reinforce the broader discussion.

A simple YouTube search or web search for 'how to get around proctoring software' or 'how to defeat AI detectors' demonstrates the issue of availability of tools to students, and the use of these tools. Knowing how and why students may choose to plagiarise or cheat, and being prepared to discuss, contextualise, and frame the ethical choices behind cheating, are ways that parents and carers can help.

Parents and carers can help influence a students' response to academic integrity challenges by targeting the pressures – real or perceived – that make students feel like they need to plagiarise.

For example:

- Procrastination

- Prioritisation (e.g., prioritising video games or socialisation over assessment work)

- Disengagement with the subject, topic, or idea behind the assessment

- Identity factors such as imagined identity (e.g., a student who feels that they 'can't fail' a task because it will be damaging to their identity as an intelligent person; a student who feels like they shouldn't bother trying on a task because they are 'not smart enough')

- Social factors such as fitting into a social group

- Perceived or actual lack of consequences for cheating

- Perceived or actual serious consequences for cheating

- Self-perceived or actual lack of skill

- Self-perceived or actual expectations from family

- Self-perceived or actual pre-requisites for tertiary/workforce opportunities

- Circumstances outside the student's control (e.g., anxiety, life events, caring responsibilities.)

## Some strategies for aiding students in working through these pressures:

- Don't attach extreme praise or punishment to school results: focus on a positive attitude and help students to understand the impact of effort and learning on tasks

- Try to avoid framing task competence as an innate factor in your student's personality (e.g., 'you got an A because you are smart'); focus on the action they undertook (e.g., 'you received an A because you worked hard')

- Some students may need assistance in managing their executive functioning (e.g., enforced screen breaks, study planning). The BSSS Student Newsletter for Semester 1 2023 has advice to assist with procrastination and setting up a study routine.

- Support the student's developing autonomy and choices; it may help to articulate the consequences for some choices using open-ended questions and non-confrontative language (e.g., 'If you play your video game all morning, you will end up writing your paper tonight. Is that going to give you enough time to complete it without being stressed?')

- Students who are extremely stressed about perceived pressures in accessing tertiary study may benefit from working through a reasonable 'back up plan' with you, or with the careers or pastoral care staff at their school. This can show students that even if they don't achieve their primary goal, there are other ways to get to their goals, or still work in an area they love.

## Questions to consider:

- Does your student understand the connection between completing this task and their goals in the class or discipline?

- Does your student understand what constitutes plagiarism? Are they aware of myths about plagiarism (e.g., 'it's okay to change a few words' or 'less than 10% of a quote doesn't need to be sourced' – neither of which is true)?

- Does your student have appropriate supports in place if something in their life is affecting their ability to complete their schoolwork?

- Does your student see their intelligence as fixed and unable to be changed, or do they have confidence to work towards their goals?

Students may also attempt to rationalise cheating. These narratives are something that parents and carers can help to challenge. For example, students may discuss the following:

| Rationalisation | Strategies |
|---|---|
| A social reason – e.g., "everyone else is doing it", "xyz source said this particular action isn't cheating" "knowledge wants to be free, and it belongs to everyone" | <ul><li>Ask genuine questions about this belief, for example:<ul><li>What are its foundations?</li><li>Is it universalisable[3]?</li><li>Can you trust the source?</li><li>How do you know everyone is cheating?</li></ul></li><li>Link back to the student's goals in the subject: why are they taking this subject? What are they going to get out of it if they do the work as opposed to cheating?</li></ul> |
| A philosophical reason – e.g., "it doesn't matter" or "in my planned profession this is the norm" | <ul><li>Ask genuine questions about this belief, for example:<ul><li>What are its foundations?</li><li>Is it universalisable?</li><li>Can you trust the source?</li><li>How do you know it's the norm?</li></ul></li><li>Check legitimate sources for the student's planned profession. Is this behaviour that will be tolerated? What are the potential consequences?</li></ul> |
| A lack of trust in the conditions of the task – e.g., "if I don't cheat, I'll be disadvantaged, because everyone else is cheating" | <ul><li>Ask questions about this belief, for example:<ul><li>How do you know everyone is cheating?</li></ul></li><li>If there is a genuine concern that everyone is cheating, support your student in reporting this to the teacher or school</li></ul> |
| In the case of unintended plagiarism, the rationalisation may be a misunderstanding or false belief that the action is not cheating | <ul><li>Speak with your student about plagiarism; what do they think it is?</li><li>Where you encounter false beliefs, explain them to be false.</li></ul> |

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[3] Universalisable: can it be applied to any situation with no exceptions. For example, if everyone plagiarises, then what are the consequences?

| Rationalisation | Strategies |
|---|---|
| A statement of ownership that does not reflect an understanding of the process of learning, academic integrity, or the task requirements – such as, "I generated it, so it's my work". | • Speak with your student about the importance of acquiring skills for themselves and the value of learning.<br><br>• Explain that although the content is generated by the student, it doesn't represent their knowledge and understanding.<br><br>• Ask genuine questions about the purpose of the assignment, for example:<br><br>    o Why do you think you were assigned this work?<br><br>    o Why does your teacher want you to do this without AI?<br><br>    o Is this a skill you will need to be able to use without needing to look it up, or a skill that future school subjects, work and your life goals will assume you have mastered?<br><br>    o How will learning this skill help you?<br><br>• Link back to the student's goals in the subject: why are they taking this subject? What are they going to get out of it if they do the work? |

# What can I do if my student is accused of plagiarism using AI?

Most computer-based plagiarism is identified using text matching tools. As AI-based plagiarism may be difficult to ascertain based on these text-matching tools, a teacher may query a student's work based on other factors. These may include:

- Mismatch between quality of student responses in formative (class work) and summative (counts for the grade) assessments

- Significant similarities between student responses that cannot be explained by context

- Student self-report or discussion of cheating (e.g., talking in the library or another class about having cheated on a particular task)

- Mismatch between knowledge and understanding demonstrated in class and in work submitted for assessment

- Misuse of language indicating lack of understanding of vocabulary and/or material

- Misuse of quotations/sources indicating lack of understanding of vocabulary and/or material

- Inconsistent use of language indicating appropriation of multiple sources.

It is important to note that suspicion does not mean a student has cheated. False positives *(unintended incorrect determinations or evaluative errors)* are both normal and expected. You know your student, and what is likely behaviour from them. Encourage your student to keep research notes and early drafts of work to provide evidence of process.

## If it's likely that your student plagiarised

- Speak with your student about honesty and the importance of doing your own work

- Don't attach extreme praise or punishment to school results: focus on a positive attitude and help students to understand the impact of effort and learning on tasks.

- Try to avoid framing task competence as an innate factor in your student's personality (e.g., "you got an A because you are smart"); focus on the action they undertook (e.g., "you got an A because you worked hard").

- Frame the penalty as part of a series of choices. The choice to plagiarise kicked off the process, which then leads to a penalty. This is one choice in a lifetime, and it will have an impact right now, but making this bad choice doesn't mean they are a bad person.

- Your student will be penalised. These penalties are set out in BSSS Policy and Procedure and will have been communicated to students in their unit outlines and/or student handbooks. It is most likely for a first offence that a student will have a mark penalty applied commensurate to the amount of the work that was plagiarised or copied from elsewhere.

- If your student has plagiarised, it is likely that this is a reaction to something else – e.g., stress, anxiety, over-commitment, feeling uncertain about course content, or fear of consequences if they do not submit the work. We recommend working with teachers, school support staff, and your student to work on the underlying issue together.

## If it's likely that your student hasn't plagiarised

- **Speak with your student about honesty and the importance of doing your own work**

- Recognise that identifying academic misconduct is part of the teacher's job and that on occasion false positives may occur. Querying potential AI plagiarism is part of making sure that the rules are fairly applied.

- There are student services or pastoral care teams at schools that can work with student to support them if they are nervous about speaking to their teacher.

- If there is suspicion that your student has handed in work that is not their own, the student will be provided with the opportunity to respond and explain. This would initially be through speaking with their teacher, and if there is still doubt, they may undertake a validation task or more involved interview. It will be helpful if they are able to demonstrate their drafting process, provide notes, or other evidence supporting their originality.

- If the student's validation task indicates a high likelihood of plagiarism, the school may apply a penalty. This penalty is appealable (with cause) as are all other assessment penalties.

# What if a student wants to appeal?

Under *BSSS Policy and Procedure*, the right to query and appeal allows for the right of contestability to be exercised by the student. This can be a query at a class teacher or head of faculty level, or an appeal at a school or eventually Board level.

A school appeal comes <u>after all other avenues at the school have been exhausted</u>. All queries and appeals, including school and Board appeals, <u>must be initiated by the student, not by a parent or carer on the student's behalf</u>.

The student first must query with the teacher and the head of faculty before a school appeal can be raised. Not paying attention in class or not reading required course materials/student handbooks doesn't excuse students from knowing about academic integrity.

If an appeal about AI plagiarism rises to the level of a school appeal, it's important to have evidence so that the committee can see what has occurred prior to the school appeal. The below information is intended to help you to know what kind of evidence you might provide to help the panel deliberate on their decision. Please note that this information has been constructed based on an appeal where AI is involved; other types of appeal may need different evidence.

## Preparing for a School Appeal

Students need to gather evidence so that the appeal panel can see it. This is best done as the student goes through the process of creating the assignment; students can put relevant documents in a digital or physical folder in case they are needed. This advice has been specifically put together in the event of an appeal against an academic integrity penalty for the use of AI; not all of these factors will apply in other appeals.

## Before the task was handed in

What happened in constructing the task? For example:

- Was there explicit guidance from the teacher or school about how AI should or should not be used?

- Was there reference to the school's assessment policies on the task sheet? (Note: BSSS policies identify the use of AI as plagiarism unless specified as allowed in the task sheet)

- How was the task drafted? Did the student save versions, talk with anyone about their work, take photos as they made a physical object, take notes, save articles?

- Did the student hand in a draft? Were they warned about the use of AI in response to this draft?

What evidence does the student have of this? For example:

- Cover sheet

- Assignment description/sheet

- Unit Outline

- Academic handbook

- Drafts

- Folder (digital or physical) of notes and research material

- Independent evidence of conversation – e.g., Teacher Librarian or mentor teacher able to corroborate that student discussed ideas with them

- Class work that demonstrates student's voice, evidence of complexity of language and thought, or nascent ideas that led to the draft

## Once the task was deemed plagiarised

What happened in the decision about applying the penalty?

- Was the student given a chance to explain their situation?

- Which of the BSSS penalties were given, and what was the reasoning explained to the student for this penalty?

- Has a letter confirming the penalty and decision gone to the student?

What evidence does/should the student have? For example:

- Meeting minutes or notes

- Copy of the letter to the student outlining the plagiarism penalty and reasons for it

- If a written validation task was given, copy of the written validation task

- If a verbal validation interview was given, notes from the interview

- Evidence from an independent observer to the process (e.g., a pastoral care teacher who attended the interview)

- Head of Faculty's written feedback after the student queried them (this is an essential step prior to a school appeal)

- Evidence that was supplied to support the student's initial query of the penalty.

In a school appeal, the student will be asked to speak with the appeal team. This will be three people – two from the student's school, and one external person. Keeping good records can help the student to explain their point of view and help the appeal team make a decision that is fair and equitable for all involved.

A Board Appeal is very rare, and only occurs when there is evidence that policy and procedure has been applied incorrectly or inconsistently. If your child gets to this stage, your school will speak with them, or they can contact the Office of the BSSS at bsssenquiries@act.gov.au.

# Further Information

[Academic Integrity Guide for students](#)

AI and Academic Integrity guide for students

Community AI Papers

- [March](#)
- [October](#)

BSSS AI Support Document

National AI Framework

Australian Capital Territory, Canberra 2023

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