



**Embedding and extending exemplary academic integrity policy
and support frameworks across the higher education sector**

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EAIP: Making Connections to TEQSA

Academic integrity (AI) given primacy of place in the **Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2011**

- Chapter 1 PROVIDER REGISTRATION STANDARDS (s.3 [3.7] & s.4 [4.3])
- Chapter 2 PROVIDER CATEGORY STANDARDS (s.2 [2.9]; s.3 [3.9]; s.4 [4.9])
- Chapter 3 PROVIDER COURSE ACCREDITATION STANDARDS (s.7 [4.4])

EAIP: Making Connections to TEQSA

Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2011 – operationalised

- *RENEWAL OF REGISTRATION*
(Part C s.2 Summary & Evidence; Part E Summary & Evidence, Criterion 4.4)
- *RENEWAL OF ACCREDITATION OF A HIGHER EDUCATION COURSE OF STUDY [AQF QUALIFICATION]*
(3.5.1 Summary & Evidence)

Fundamental values of academic integrity

“Academic integrity is a commitment, even in the face of adversity, to five fundamental values: **honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility**. From these values flow principles of behaviour that enable academic communities to translate ideals into action”.

(Fundamental Values Project 1999, International Centre for Academic Integrity)

EAIP: What are we “embedding and extending”?



- Findings and recommendations from the OLT funded *Academic Integrity Standards Project*.
- Five core elements of exemplary academic integrity policy.
- Adaptation of best practices for identified student groups:
 - International English as an Additional Language (EAL) students
 - ‘Educationally less prepared’ students
 - Higher Degree by Research (HDR) students.

Academic Integrity Standards Project*

- Analysed Australian academic integrity policies (39 universities)
- Student survey
- Interviewed senior managers
- Focus groups with students and staff
- Aimed to foster a culture of academic integrity



Academic
Integrity
Standards
Project
2010-2012

*Lead institution: University of South Australia

Project partners: University of Adelaide, University of Western Australia, La Trobe University, University of Newcastle, University of Wollongong.

Project website: www.aisp.apfei.edu.au

AISP policy analysis: Key findings

- Changing focus from misconduct (51% of policies) to **integrity and education** (41%). 28% mixed focus.
- 10% policies concerned with **risk management**.
- Students still considered to be responsible for AI (institution mentioned in only 39% of policies).
- Most policies (56%) **lacked sufficient detail** about breaches and outcomes.
- Most policies (56%) made no mention of **confidentiality**.

5 core elements of exemplary policy



No element privileged over another

Elements interconnected

Strength of the knot

Overarching commitment to academic integrity lies at the heart of an exemplary academic integrity policy

5 core elements of exemplary policy

- **Access:** Easy to locate, read, concise, comprehensible.
- **Approach:** Aspirational statement of purpose with educative focus up-front and all through policy.
- **Responsibility:** Details responsibilities for ALL stakeholders.
- **Detail:** Extensive but not excessive description of breaches, outcomes and processes.
- **Support:** Proactive and embedded systems to enable implementation of the policy (for both students and staff).

Student survey

Largest student survey on academic integrity in Australia.

Different to previous student surveys:

- Not seeking to gain additional data on the number, frequency, type or cause of academic integrity breaches.
- Students not required to self-report cheating behaviours.
- Survey designed to give students the opportunity to share their understandings of academic integrity.
- Focus on how students wish to be educated about the issue.

Student survey highlights

- **64.5%** of students said they had heard of academic integrity and thought they had a good idea what it entails.
- **4.4%** of total students and **8.8%** of international students had never heard of academic integrity.
- **64.7%** said they knew whether their university had an academic integrity policy and they knew how to access it.
- **79.9%** of total students agreed that the academic integrity policy was clearly communicated, but only **70.4%** of postgraduate research (HDR) students agreed.
- **94.2%** of total students (and **89.4%** of international students) stated they felt confident they knew how to avoid an AI breach.
- **92.1%** of total students and **95.6%** of HDR students agreed that academic integrity has relevance to their lives beyond university.

Student survey: Key findings

1. Majority reported a **good understanding** of academic integrity and AI policy and were satisfied with support and training.
2. A disproportionate percentage felt **confident** about avoiding an AI breach.
3. **International students expressed lower understanding** of AI and lower confidence in how to avoid a breach.
4. **Postgraduate research students were the least satisfied** with the information they had received.
5. Small group (4.4%) of **educationally 'less prepared'** students had never heard of academic integrity.

Interviews with senior managers

What is your understanding of academic integrity?

- **Many respondents reluctant to focus on positives**

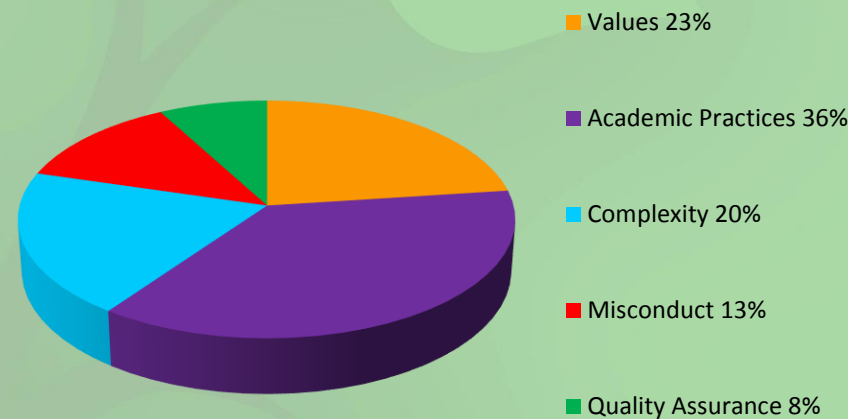
“...the only time anyone’s ever really thinking about notions of academic integrity is when they’re reducing it simply to academic misconduct and pinging someone for plagiarism....” (Senior Manager 1, University C)

Foundation concepts: Understandings of academic integrity

Academic integrity is:

1. grounded in action;
2. underpinned by values;
3. multifaceted and applicable to multiple stakeholders;
4. understood by many in terms of what is *not* (misconduct); and
5. important as a means of assuring the quality and credibility of the educational process.

Understandings of Academic Integrity



Aims of the Exemplary Academic Integrity Project (EAIP)

1. Extend and embed the '5 core elements' of exemplary AI policy across the higher education sector.
2. Develop resources accessible to both public and private higher education providers.
3. Develop support systems for International English as an Additional Language (EAL) students.
4. Develop support systems for educationally 'less prepared' students.
5. Extend lessons about policy and support to higher degree by research (HDR) students.

Where are we up to?

1. Roundtable with key stakeholders
 - *What actually happens in practice?*
 - Best practice framework
2. National Speaking Tour
3. Postgrad Research policy analysis
4. Resources for student groups
5. Online academic integrity policy toolkit

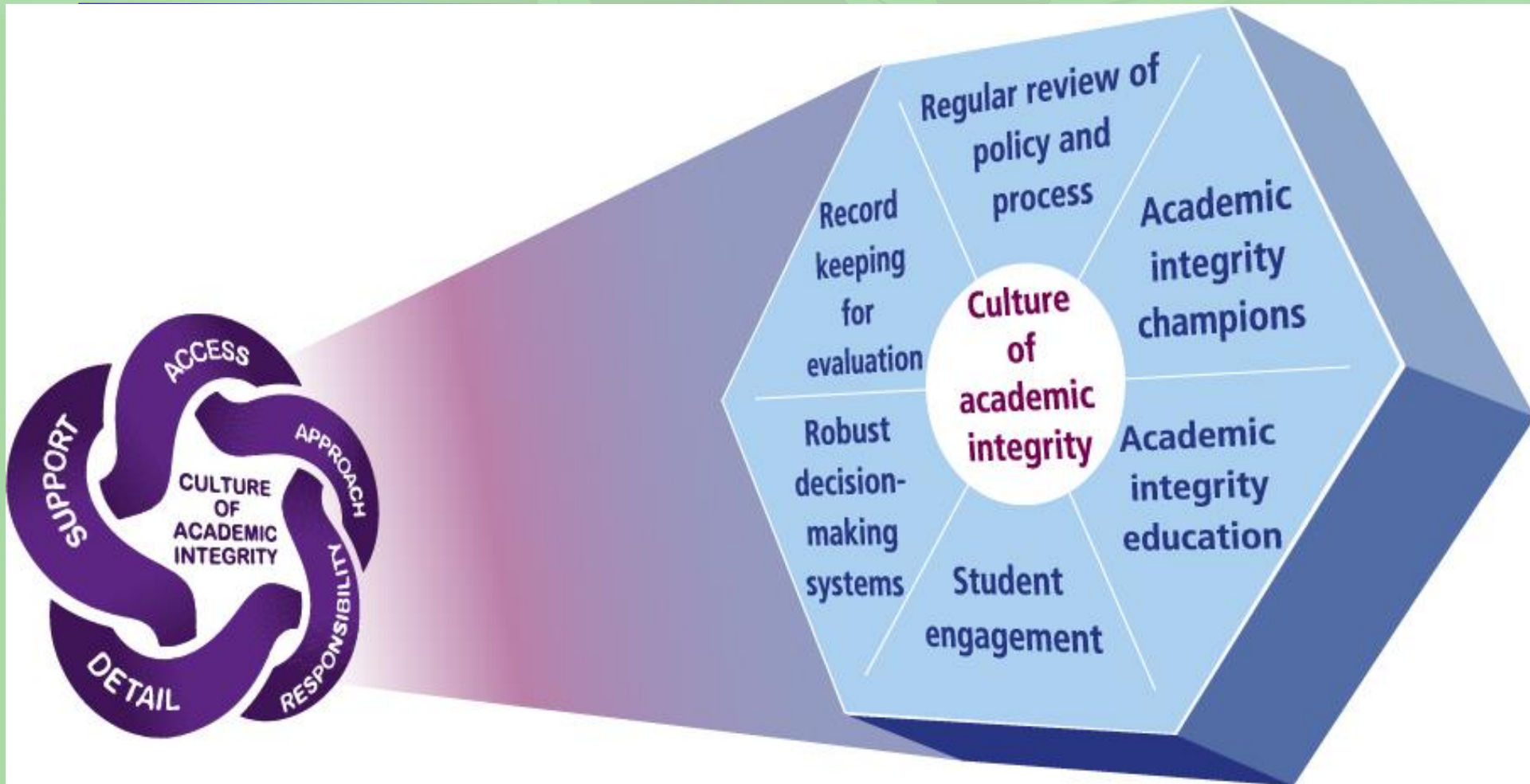
National speaking tour

- Representatives from five universities identified as having exemplary policies made presentations at the Roundtable.
- Transcripts from presentations analysed.
- Findings immediately shared with both public and private HE providers across 5 states in Australia.
- Recommendations for good practice echo work by East (2009), East & McGowan (2012), Morris (2011), ICAI.

Building a culture of integrity

“... a strong policy is of course an essential part of creating a culture of academic integrity, but I’m not so sure what comes first, whether the culture generates the strong policy or the strong policy generates the culture, but never the less it’s absolutely essential. But it’s not enough; it’s not enough to create that culture. You need to have the supporting processes, particularly for staff in order to have a truly effective alignment of policy and practice - both to establish and to maintain a rigorous culture of academic integrity.” (transcript of Roundtable presentation, University B)

Framework for enacting exemplary academic integrity policy



Support and training for postgraduate research students

AISP survey finding: postgraduate research students least satisfied with information & support.

Suggestion for support:

“Actual examples of how students most commonly breach academic integrity would be great (especially for those incidents that happen accidentally) and the penalties for doing so would be useful. Examples of how to go about avoiding breaches would also be great.” (AISP survey student response)

Fostering academic integrity in postgraduate research*

- Need for **consistent and educative approach** to integrity across the university, at all levels of scholarship and for all stakeholders.
- Postgraduate research students have unique role as both **students and research trainees**.
- **Web links** needed from main academic integrity policy to all research related policies/resources.
- Link postgraduate policy to detail on breaches and outcomes
- **Much more needed to meet the unique needs of postgraduate research students.**

Targeted support for EAL students

*“My concern is that students with ESL may have difficulty understanding the concept.... Other students have copied web based information too easily and many don't understand why it should be checked as a 'proper' source. There should also be **stronger support for ESL students** who already have difficulty with the language and don't often realise they're committing plagiarism when writing their essays....”(AISP survey student response)*

EAIP deliverables

- Developing an online academic integrity policy template (toolkit)
- Definition of academic integrity in plain English
- Collecting academic integrity YouTube videos
- Identifying good AI resources for postgraduate research students
- Developing case scenarios for use in postgrad training
- Developing a draft of postgrad academic integrity policy and practice guidelines for Deans & Directors of Graduate Studies

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Questions?

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