

Student Academic Integrity Handbook

2020-2021



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What is Academic Integrity?

Academic integrity is part of personal integrity. Personal integrity is a way of acting that others would see as honourable. It is a demonstration of high moral values and ethical beliefs. We value people who demonstrate integrity and we would like others to see us as people with integrity.

Academic integrity is a demonstration of personal integrity in an academic environment. Integrity in academic work is central to all learning. It forms the basis of academic work in any institute of higher learning and is built on the principles of fairness, honesty, trust, respect, responsibility, and courage. Making a commitment not to engage in acts of dishonesty, falsification, misrepresentation, or deception is the first step in preserving academic integrity.



THE PRINCIPLES OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY¹

Academic integrity is built on six overlapping principles that reflect the core values needed for good academic work. These principles are:

FAIRNESS

Fair treatment is essential to an ethical community. Important components of fairness include reasonableness, transparency, impartiality, and just treatment. You are fair to others and to the community when you act with honesty and do your own work. You are fair to authors and writers when you acknowledge borrowed ideas, words, and work. You are fair to the academic community when you respect and uphold academic standards and practices.

HONESTY

Honesty means being truthful and sincere, as well as acting in ways that are fair and free from deceit. Honesty begins with individuals and extends to the larger community. To seek knowledge and grow from that knowledge, you must be honest with yourself and others. Cultivating and practicing honesty lays a foundation for lifelong integrity.

TRUST

Trust is a belief in the reliability, truth, ability, or strength of someone or something. Trust is a necessary foundation of academic work. Trust enables you to collaborate, share information, and circulate new ideas without fear that your work will be undermined or misused, or your career or reputation diminished.

RESPECT

Respect is a feeling of admiration for someone or something based on abilities, qualities, or achievements. Mutual respect means valuing others as you would like them to value you. In academic communities, respect means showing that you care about the opinions, reputation, and well-being of the academic community.

RESPONSIBILITY

Being responsible means standing up against wrongdoing, resisting negative peer pressure, and serving as a positive example. Responsible individuals hold themselves accountable for their own actions and work to discourage misconduct by others. For members of the academic community, this means safeguarding integrity, scholarship, teaching, and research.

COURAGE

Courage is an element of character that allows you to commit to the quality of your education by holding yourself and your fellow students to the highest standards of academic integrity – even when doing so involves risk or prompts negative consequences from peers. Being courageous means acting in accordance to your convictions.

¹ Adapted from The Fundamentals of Academic Integrity, International Center for Academic Integrity, 2014, <https://www.academicintegrity.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Fundamental-Values-2014.pdf>.

WHY IS ACADEMIC INTEGRITY IMPORTANT?

Throughout your time at Langara, you will operate within a wider system that includes others you encounter on campus and relationships you have outside of the academic environment. This includes relationships with friends, family, instructors, other professionals, and current and future employers. Your reputation with these individuals and the degree of respect these individuals may hold for you are based on whether they see you as honest, fair, and trustworthy.

Friends, family, and others want to know they can trust and rely on you. They want to know that you will treat them fairly and with respect, and that they will not be used or taken advantage of.

Employers prefer to hire individuals who have graduated from a reputable institution whose credential they can trust. They want employees who show integrity and can add value to a business and enhance its reputation.

The society values honest, responsible, and courageous individuals who balance their own needs and interests with those of other people.

Learning and the acquisition of meaningful knowledge can be applied later in life and in future careers. In your academic journey at Langara, you must demonstrate that you, as an individual, have acquired the necessary learning and knowledge. To demonstrate knowledge, you must do your own work.

The reputation of our institution rests upon academic excellence and that excellence gives value to the credential you earn upon graduation.

WHAT IS A STUDENT'S RESPONSIBILITY?²

The College places a high value on academic honesty. It is expected and required in all settings, whether on campus or at an off-site location such as a practicum, a co-op site, during on-line courses, or when undertaking academic work from home.

Students are expected to demonstrate academic integrity in all academic work. It is your responsibility to know and follow the rules and expectations around academic integrity, and this guide will help you understand your obligations, introduce the policies and processes around academic integrity, and provide some tips and advice to make sure that you are acting with integrity.

CULTURAL DIFFERENCES: HELP FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS³

Upon arrival at Langara College, international students have to adjust to many new and different things: different language, different culture, and a different climate. You may be missing family and home while trying to make new friends and encountering a new educational environment. It may be unlike anything you have experienced before.

In many places, education systems are based on a model where professors or teachers are experts and only they are qualified to pass on this knowledge. Students are expected to learn by listening, writing, repeating, and memorizing exactly what the professor shares with them. It is the professor who passes on information, ideas, and solutions to problems to their students.⁴

At Langara College students are expected to be active participants in the educational process. This means that you will be expected to debate, analyze, think critically, ask questions, and be invested in your own academic growth. When some international students arrive at Langara they may initially have some difficulty adapting to this model which includes unfamiliar learning activities like participating in classroom discussions, conducting independent research, and writing critical papers. This can be challenging and a little scary if you have never done it before.

Langara College has resources to help you and these will be outlined later in this guide.

² Adapted from "Cheating, Plagiarism, and Fraud," University of Manitoba Student Advocacy, January 2015, http://umanitoba.ca/student/resource/student_advocacy/cheating_plagiarism_fraud.html#a.

What is an Academic Integrity Violation?

An academic integrity violation includes any number of practices that fail to show that you have done your own work in your own words. Violations include deliberate acts of deceit and misrepresentation, but also include the unintentional effort to obtain an academic advantage for yourself or for your fellow students.

CHEATING

Langara College describes cheating as “an act of deceit, distortion of the truth, or improper use of another person’s effort to obtain an academic advantage.”⁵

Many activities to gain an unfair or unearned academic advantage fall under the larger umbrella of cheating.

Cheating includes unauthorized collaboration, fabrication, falsification, and misrepresentation. It can also include plagiarism. Let’s look at these ideas more closely.

CHEATING ON TESTS, QUIZZES, AND FINAL EXAMINATIONS

Examples include:

- copying from another student’s exam, test, or quiz paper or screen;
- letting another student copy from your exam paper or screen;
- obtaining or using a copy of an exam before it is given;
- using unauthorized textbooks, materials, or technologies during an exam;
- communicating with other students or other persons during an exam;
- obtaining, having, or distributing unauthorized information about exams and exam materials through material or online methods (e.g. Course Hero); and
- arranging for another person to sit an exam in your place.

CHEATING ON ASSIGNMENTS, LAB/RESEARCH WORK, PRACTICUMS, & GROUP WORK

Examples include:

- collaborating with others on an assignment without the express permission of the instructor;
- giving essays or other assignments, in whole or in part, to other students in person or online;
- distributing your own work or information about assignments through websites like Course Hero or Chegg that other students might use to gain advantage;
- preparing and/or sharing work, in whole or in part, with the expectation that another student may submit to meet course requirements;
- submitting any academic work containing a reference to a source that has been fabricated, falsified, or misrepresented, including in research or lab work (e.g. making up fake lab results);
- submitting, in whole or in part, an essay, presentation, or assignment more than once, whether the earlier submission was at this or another institution, unless prior approval has been obtained from the instructor(s);
- taking credit for group work that you did not complete; and
- helping or allowing another student to cheat or plagiarize.

See the Langara College Policy F1004 for more detailed information:

- [Policy F1004 - Academic Integrity](#)

3 Adapted from “Academic Integrity and Plagiarism,” Mount Saint Vincent University, August 2020, <https://libguides.msvu.ca/c.php?g=151208&p=4181067#s-lg-box-12986364>.

4 William Badke, *Beyond the Answer Sheet: Academic Success for International Students*, (Lincoln, NE: iUniverse, 2003).

5 “Academic Integrity Policy – F1004,” Langara College, 2018, <https://langara.ca/about-langara/policies/pdf/F1004.pdf>.

PLAGIARISM

Langara College describes plagiarism as “the presentation of words and/or images and/or ideas from another person or source as if they were one’s own.” Plagiarism can be intentional or unintentional.

Plagiarism can range from submitting an entire assignment that is not your work to copying a specific phrase within an assignment taken from a source without acknowledging or properly citing that source. As you write, always ask yourself the question, “should I be citing a source for this?”

EXAMPLES OF PLAGIARISM⁶

Here are several different behaviours that can be considered plagiarism.

Direct plagiarism (copy and paste)

- Copying another writer’s work with no attempt to acknowledge that the material was found in another source (including another student’s work).

“Patchwork” plagiarism

- Copying material from several writers and rearranging it without citation.

“Word Switch” plagiarism

- Using synonyms to change words in a source to make it appear as if they are your own; using language translations to mask the source and presenting the content as if it is your own work.

Plagiarism in graphs, charts, figures, or images

- Using any of the above without identifying the source.

Citation errors

- Incorporating another writer’s words/phrases into a paraphrased text without quotation marks or proper citation.
- Paraphrasing or summarizing a text without acknowledging (citing) that the ideas are taken from another writer.
- Using words or ideas from another writer with an attempt to acknowledge the source, but doing so without adequate or correct citation.

“Common knowledge” errors

- Failing to cite material because it is mistakenly assumed to be “common knowledge”.

Bibliography or reference list errors

- Failing to ensure a bibliography or list of references is complete and accurate.
- Adding sources to a bibliography or list of references that were not used.
- Fabricating a source.

⁶ Adapted from “Examples of Plagiarism,” Northern Illinois University, 2020, <https://www.niu.edu/academic-integrity/faculty/committing/examples/index.shtml>.

A WORD ABOUT ACADEMIC WRITING

Academic writing is very different from other forms of writing like business writing, creative writing, promotional writing, or email correspondence.

In academic writing, you write to show your instructor what you've learned and how you think about it. The structure is formal and you must be able to show where ideas, words, and images come from using proper citation practices. Considerable effort is given to building an argument or perspective and showing how that was built. The audience for academic writing is your instructor.

WHY DO WE CITE?⁷

When you cite your sources, you provide publication details for the original work to your readers so they can find it, you give credit to the author of the original work, and you strengthen your own argument by incorporating credible works by experts in the field. You also show your instructor that you're well informed and have read widely and deeply from appropriate sources that best support your argument.



IMAGE VIA FREEPIK

7 Adapted from "Avoiding Plagiarism – Introduction to Citing," Langara College Library, 2019, <https://langara.libguides.com/c.php?g=709153&p=5052329>.

WHY DO PEOPLE MAKE THE MISTAKE OF PLAGIARIZING?⁸¹

Here are some common excuses.

“It was an accident.”

Sometimes you may include information or ideas in your work that you forgot to cite. While this may be unintentional, it is still plagiarism. It is part of your responsibility as a student to double check your work and make sure that all of your sources are cited correctly.

“I ran out of time.”

It can become very easy to simply cut and paste other writer’s words when you run out of time.

“That’s such a good idea how can I say it any other way?”

Putting other people’s ideas into your own words can be challenging when you are a new writer or when you run out of time because of leaving an assignment to the last minute. But using your own words shows us that you are learning. If you absolutely must use someone else’s words, you must include a citation and format your quotations properly.

“It’s not a big deal.”

Plagiarism is a big deal and each year many students are charged with academic integrity violations. Your growth and learning is important to you and to us.

“No one will notice.”

In fact, your instructors at Langara will notice and if they suspect you have plagiarized, they will investigate and present you with the evidence.



IMAGE VIA FREEPIK

FABRICATION, FALSIFICATION, OR MISREPRESENTATION⁹

Fabrication, falsification, or misrepresentation is when you create, alter, or falsely report information for an assignment or test. This can include altering images, documents, music, art, or other work without permission of the creator and/or without acknowledgment of the alteration and source. It can also include creating, altering, or falsely reporting – including by omission – lab or research data.

UNAUTHORIZED COLLABORATION

Unauthorized collaboration includes:

- working with another student, a group of students, a friend, a tutor, or a family member to complete an assignment that was intended to be done individually;
- borrowing all or part of another student's paper; and
- sharing your original research or lab work with another student.

Unauthorized collaboration can be avoided by checking directly with the course instructor. In most cases, unless stated, assignments should be completed individually.

CONTRACT CHEATING

Contract cheating is when you get a third party to complete academic work that you then submit as your own. Contract cheating includes:

- having a friend, classmate, or relative complete work for free;
- downloading an essay from the internet; and
- using a paper writing service to complete an assignment.

THE IMPACT OF CHEATING AND PLAGIARIZING¹⁰

In addition to academic penalties, cheating and plagiarizing have several other serious consequences.

Your learning is affected. Every assignment, test, and exam you do is an opportunity to gain new knowledge and demonstrate your skills. Through practice and perseverance, your skills and abilities increase and prepare you for success in your professional pursuits. You lose that opportunity when you cheat or plagiarize. Not only do you risk academic integrity violations, and the reputation of the College or a particular department, but you also may be ill-prepared to do your job effectively.

8 Adapted from "Academic Integrity and Plagiarism," Mount Saint Vincent University, August 2020, <https://libguides.msvu.ca/c.php?g=151208&p=4181067#s-lg-box-12987167>.

9 Adapted from "Fabrication or Falsification – Academic Integrity Tutorials," Northern Illinois University, 2020, <https://www.niu.edu/academic-integrity/students/cheating/fabrication-or-falsification.shtml>.

10 Adapted from "Academic Integrity and Plagiarism," Mount Saint Vincent University, August 2020, <https://libguides.msvu.ca/c.php?g=151208&p=4181067#s-lg-box-12987167>.

Langara's Response to an Academic Integrity Violation

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN AN INSTRUCTOR SUSPECTS ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT?

Instructors may suspect academic misconduct when reviewing the work that you have submitted. If an instructor suspects that you have plagiarized or cheated, they will contact you, inform you of their concerns, and ask you to provide a response. This response may take place during a meeting that the instructor organizes, or the instructor may request a response over email.

You are advised to respond to your instructor when these concerns are raised. If you have evidence showing that you have not acted inappropriately, you should share these materials with your instructor. For example, if an instructor contacts you saying that they believe that plagiarism has occurred, you can provide earlier drafts or research notes of your work to show your thought process.

If your instructor still suspects academic misconduct after meeting with you, they will report the situation to the Office of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity (SCAI).

HOW SHOULD I RESPOND TO MY INSTRUCTOR WHEN I'M NOTIFIED OF AN ALLEGATION OF ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT?

If you are suspected of academic misconduct, you may have an emotional response such as anger, anxiety, or fear. Remember to show restraint in your feelings when responding to your instructor and respond professionally. At the end of this guide, you will find College resources that are available to you if you would like to discuss your case and receive information or advice on College policy and procedures.

When responding to your instructor, keep the following in mind:

- Consider the evidence against you. Note that the burden of proof to be found responsible for academic misconduct is known as the 'balance of probabilities'. This means that if the evidence against you is strong, you will likely be found in violation of the Academic Integrity Policy.
- Be honest. Denial in the face of evidence will not resolve the situation. Lying or fabricating evidence may lead to more severe disciplinary sanctions.
- Remember that there is an appeal process available. If you believe that you are not being fully heard or procedure is not being followed, you have the opportunity to raise these concerns through the appeal process.

WHAT IF I DIDN'T INTEND TO VIOLATE THE ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY?

It's important to note that even if you did not intend to violate the Academic Integrity Policy, you may still be found responsible for the violation and face sanctions.

You are expected to review the Academic Integrity Policy, avoid academic integrity violations, and reach out to your instructor or campus services to ask for advice if you are unsure about your work.



IMAGE BY PCH VECTOR VIA FREEPIK

WHAT HAPPENS IF I AM REPORTED FOR ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT?

If you are reported, the Office of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity will process the report and inform you about next steps.

For a first violation, you will receive a Decision Letter, which will note the details of your case and what sanctions the instructor has placed on the student.

If you have previous violations, then you will receive a letter notifying you that your report has been forwarded to the Division Chair overseeing the department for review. The Division Chair will reach out to you requesting a response to the allegations before sending you a decision letter. In this decision letter, the Division Chair will note if you are responsible.

WHAT SANCTIONS COULD I FACE?

For a first violation, you may face one or more of the following sanctions:

- Formal warning;
- Remedial sanctions (e.g. the resubmission of work);
- Educational sanctions (e.g. a reflection paper);
- Reduced mark the student's assignment or exam;
- A zero on the student's assignment or exam; and/or
- A requirement to complete an Academic Integrity Tutorial.

If you have previous incidents of academic misconduct, you may face the previous sanctions in addition to the following possible sanctions (Note: the severity of sanctions will increase with every additional incident):

- Reduced grade in the course;
- A grade of "F" in a course;
- A recommendation to the President for suspension from the College; and/or
- A recommendation to the President for rescinding or denying a College credential.

HOW ARE DECISIONS MADE?

There are a variety of factors that are considered if you are found responsible for academic misconduct. Some of these factors may include:

- Was the academic misconduct planned or a result of stress or impulse?
- Have you been honest and co-operative during the academic integrity process?
- Is this your first offense?
- Do you seem genuinely sorry and apologetic for the offense?
- Were other students affected by your actions?
- Were you aware that the offense was a case of academic misconduct?
- How much of your work has been affected by the academic misconduct?

WHAT GOES ON THE RECORD?

Reported incidents of academic misconduct are kept on file in the Office of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity. A record of the academic misconduct does not appear on your official student record (such as transcripts). If you are suspended from the College for academic integrity violation(s), you will receive a notation of Disciplinary Suspension on your transcript.

APPEAL PROCEDURES

If you disagree with the decision or sanction placed when you are found responsible for academic misconduct, you do have the opportunity to appeal the decision. When appealing, you must ensure that you have grounds to appeal the decision. The only grounds to appeal an academic integrity decision are:

- The action which received a sanction does not constitute an academic integrity violation.
- There is clear evidence of a procedural error that significantly affects the outcome of the decision.
- The sanction is too harsh given the nature of the violation.

If you believe that you have grounds for a formal appeal, then you need to write a formal appeal letter and submit the letter to Student Services:

- Email dss.office@langara.ca.

Detailed instructions on how to write an appeal letter can be found in this document.

- [How to Write an Appeal Letter - Student Services](#)

Important Note: Sanctions will not be removed or altered unless you submit an appeal and the appeal is successful.

What can I do to practice Academic Integrity?

You may feel very anxious about making sure that you are completing coursework and meeting instructor expectations with integrity. Here are several tips or ideas that will help make sure you are keeping yourself in good standing.

PREPARATION AND KEEPING TRACK OF YOUR WORK

TIP 1 Give yourself the gift of time.

It may seem like clichéd advice but starting assignments early and working on them over a longer period is one of the best ways to set yourself up for success. Many academic integrity violations are born out of desperation or procrastination. If you start your assignments early, you'll be able to make sure to give yourself time to clear up any questions about assignment instructions. For help with time management, check out the resource page at the end of this guide.

TIP 2 Pay close attention to assignment descriptions and your syllabus.

Instructors will usually write detailed descriptions of your assignments within the syllabus for the course, on additional handouts, or within Brightspace. Pay very close attention to the instructions provided for assignments. Read them carefully and highlight, underline, or make note of particularly important things you fear you might miss.

TIP 3 Ask for help before you get in trouble.

Sometimes, even if you have read an assignment's instructions carefully, you might still have questions about completing the assignment according to your instructor's expectations. For example, are you able to work with a group on an assignment or are you meant to complete it alone? Is there a specific citation style that your instructor prefers? If you make sure that you fully understand your instructor's expectations before you start the assignment, you have a much better chance of acting with integrity.

USING SOURCES CORRECTLY

Plagiarism refers to the presentation of words and/or images and/or ideas from another person or source as if they were one's own.

In many cases, plagiarism occurs because students were not fully aware of how to put together sources in their assignments. Lacking proper citations, failing to add quotation marks, or paraphrasing inappropriately can all lead to instances of plagiarism. Here are some tips that will help you avoid plagiarism.

TIP 1 Keep careful track of your sources as you use them.

Taking notes about your sources as you read them will help you remember what pieces of information came from which source. This way, if you ask yourself the question "Where did this come from?" you'll already know!

TIP 2 Be careful when direct quoting a passage from a text.

When you are using an author's words in exactly the order they used them, you need to let your reader know exactly which words are not yours. You indicate this by putting quotation marks around the direct quote (e.g. "To be or not to be.")

TIP 3 Be careful when paraphrasing another author's ideas.

In academic writing, you will likely have to change the exact words of a source while still using the information it provides. In this case, you are paraphrasing the original source – taking the information and putting it into your own words. In these cases, make sure that you are still including proper citations and indicating which ideas belong to someone else.

LEARNING HOW TO CITE YOUR SOURCES

The first time you put together citations, it may seem very confusing. Citation is an important part of completing research assignments because scholarship is a conversation. Your citations tell your reader which scholars you are listening to, learning from, and analyzing in your research. Citation gets easier with practice, but here are some tips that will help you think about citation practices.

TIP 1 You don't have to memorize the rules of citation styles.

It is important to know that there are different manuals and specific rules for citation. The three most common are the Modern Languages Association (MLA), the American Psychological Association (APA), and the Chicago Manual of Style (Chicago). You will almost never be in a situation where you have to memorize the rules of citation – you should have access to guides and other resources as you complete your assignments to help you put your citations together.

TIP 2 Be very detail oriented when it comes to citation.

It may seem silly, but citations styles do have very specific rules about capitalization, punctuation, and the order information about a source appears. You should always compare your citation against the citation guides to make sure that every detail is in exactly the right place.

TIP 3 You can use citation generators, but do not trust them completely.

There are many online services or internal database tools that will put together your citations for you. These will save you a lot of time, but they are not perfect. Sometimes, they will not have all the right information, format the citations in strange ways, or not comply exactly with the style manuals. Always make sure you double check your citations against the guides to make sure that your citations are perfect.

Resources

There are many places to turn to help you with issues of research, writing, and citation.

- Your instructor during office hours
- Langara Student Services

Counselling offers a number of student success resources and workshops to help you develop good study skills.

- [Student Success Overview](#)
- [Student Success Workshops](#)
- [Time Management and Procrastination Resources – Langara Student Services](#)

The Langara Library can provide help with assignment from research to citation.

- [Langara Library Homepage](#)
- [Citation Help](#)
- [Assignment Help](#)

WRITING AND TUTORING CENTRE

You can get free writing help and subject tutoring from the Writing and Tutoring Centre.

- [Writing and Tutoring Centre Homepage](#)

Resources for policy and procedural information if you have been notified of an Academic Integrity Violation

- [Langara Student's Union Ombudsperson](#)
- [Langara Counselling Office](#)
- [Office of Student Conduct & Academic Integrity](#)
- [Langara International Education](#)
- [Langara Student's Union Immigration Counselling](#)