

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY



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Ensuring academic integrity is vital to protecting the standards and esteem of The University of Melbourne's degrees. The maintenance of academic integrity involves high quality scholarly practices, the use of reputable sources of information and the full acknowledgment of the authors and creators of ideas and materials that have informed one's work.

Academic misconduct in built environment disciplines

As part of coursework, ABP students engage in a range of teaching and learning activities intended to stimulate critical thinking and creativity. Assessment tasks designed to evaluate student learning can lead to diverse outcomes making it difficult for staff to detect academic misconduct. Staff may also lack clarity about their responsibilities, when it comes to suspected cases of academic misconduct.

This resource, developed by the Built Environments Learning and Teaching (BEL+T) group with assistance from ABP's Academic Support Office, provides staff with:

- Information about types of academic misconduct detected in ABP: and
- Guidance about steps staff should take if they suspect academic misconduct.

Cases of academic misconduct are dealt with by ABP via two methods: formal education or referral to the Academic Misconduct Committee. The Academic Support Office will advise staff about which method may be appropriate, based on the circumstances of their case. The ABP [Academic Misconduct](#) web-page sets out the procedure that will be followed by the Faculty once staff have reported a suspected case and provided evidence of their claim.

Types of academic misconduct

Academic misconduct includes any strategies used by a student to gain unfair academic advantage over their peers. This includes, but is not limited to:

PLAGIARISM

CLASSIC
DIGITAL
SCAFFOLDED
SELF

**GHOST
WRITING**

COMMISSIONED
PEER SUPPORTED

COLLUDE

BORROWING
COLLUSION

FABRICATION FALSE DOCUMENTS



Sally is copying text from a published source directly into her report without acknowledging the author or using correct citation methods.

CLASSIC PLAGIARISM



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Classic plagiarism involves students copying text (paragraphs, sentences, a single sentence or significant parts of a sentence), tables, graphs, diagrams and / or images from printed sources without using correct referencing to acknowledge the creator.

How can I detect classic plagiarism?

In the past, staff have suspected classic plagiarism in student submissions with:

- **Inadequate paraphrasing**, where students have tried to explain an author's ideas in their own words, but their wording remains too close to the original text.
- **Incomplete reference lists** - intext citations missing.
- Older (more than three months) access dates for online resources.
- Online resources (webpages) that cannot be accessed via the link provided.

Submissions with **very low similarity scores in Turnitin** can signal that students are employing strategies to deliberately avoid detection. Such strategies include:

- **Replacing words** in the author's original text with synonyms.
- Replacing all the spaces in the text with invisible (white) text.
- Inserting an **image of the text**.
- Swapping common characters with foreign language characters that look similar.
- Cycling the author's original text through Google translation.

What steps should I take?

1. If you are a Tutor, advise the Senior Tutor or Subject Coordinator of your suspicions about the authenticity of a submission.
2. Collect evidence of the suspected misconduct, without accusing the student of engaging in misconduct. This should include:
 - A copy of the student's submission that highlights the suspicious content, *and*
 - The original source* *and / or*
 - Notes from a meeting with the student where they were asked to explain the formation of ideas and/or conclusions.
3. The Senior Tutor or Subject Coordinator should contact ABP Academic Service Office, with evidence, for advice on next steps.

*Via Google search / reverse image search



Jia is copying and pasting images from the Internet directly into her design journal without citing the source of the images.

Digital plagiarism involves copying text (paragraphs, sentences, a single sentence or significant parts of a sentence), tables graphs, diagrams and / or images from digital sources, without using correct referencing to acknowledge the creator.

How can I detect digital plagiarism?

In the past, staff have suspected digital plagiarism where students have used **unreferenced online images and diagrams** to communicate:

- Design research and / or stages of project development.
- Spatial qualities and / or design details of the project.
- Building systems including technical details such as ESD features.

NB: It is becoming increasingly common for students to limit academic research to online sources. Students can unintentionally plagiarise through **over reliance on the 'copy and paste' function**, combined with poor record keeping about what content was sourced from where.

What steps should I take?

1. If you are a Tutor, advise the Senior Tutor or Subject Coordinator of your suspicions about the authenticity of a submission.
2. Collect evidence of the suspected misconduct, without accusing the student of engaging in misconduct. This should include:
 - A copy of the student's submission that highlights the suspicious content, *and*
 - The original source* *and / or*
 - Notes from a meeting with the student where they were asked to explain the formation of ideas and/or conclusions.
3. The Senior Tutor or Subject Coordinator should contact ABP Academic Service Office, with evidence, for advice on next steps.

*Via Google search / reverse image search



Xavier has noticed that one of his students is presenting precedent studies as their own work, without citing the original source/s.

SCAFFOLDED PLAGIARISM



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Scaffolded plagiarism involves using key points (including ideas) or structure of another person's work as the framework of a student's own submission without acknowledging the source/s.

How can I detect scaffolded plagiarism?

In the past, staff have suspected scaffolded plagiarism in submissions where students:

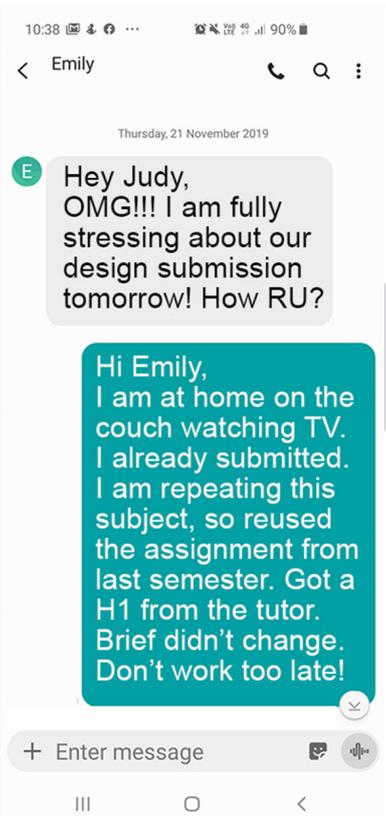
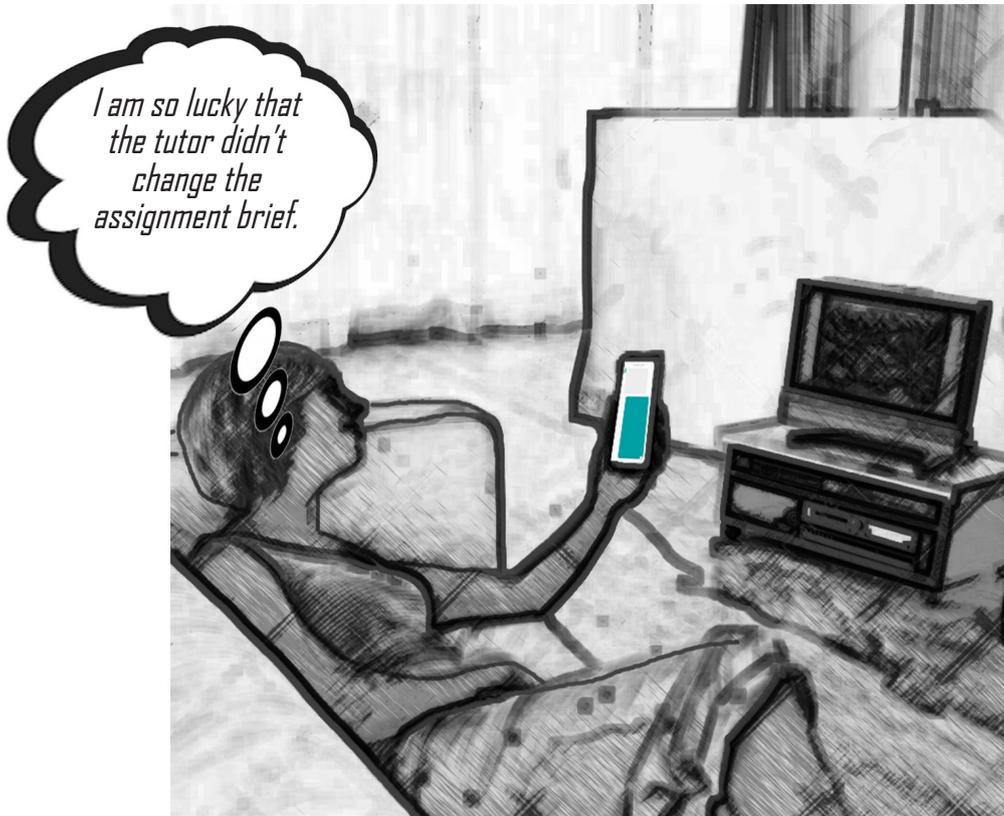
- Appropriate original sketches **created by tutors or peers** during a design review of their work (i.e. student includes the sketch as part of their project development without acknowledging the input of others).
- Appropriate original ideas **prepared by their peers** in previous semesters.
- Are **too literal** when applying precedent studies to their design.

NB: Understanding precedents and engaging in feedback loops are important parts of built environment education. Students should acknowledge the source of any ideas and be supported by staff to participate in an iterative design process where another person's idea takes on a new identity / purpose.

What steps should I take?

1. If you are a Tutor, advise the Senior Tutor or Subject Coordinator of your suspicions about the authenticity of a submission.
2. Collect evidence of the suspected misconduct, without accusing the student of engaging in misconduct. This should include:
 - A copy of the student's submission that highlights the suspicious content, *and*
 - The original source* *and / or*
 - Notes from a meeting with the student where they were asked to explain the formation of ideas and/or conclusions.
3. The Senior Tutor or Subject Coordinator should contact ABP Academic Service Office, with evidence, for advice on next steps.

*Via Google search / reverse image search



Judy is repeating a subject and has resubmitted an assignment that she has already received a grade for.

SELF PLAGIARISM (RECYCLED)



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Self plagiarism involves resubmitting an assignment (in full or in part) that has already been submitted for assessment (and graded) in any course at any university. This includes when students are repeating subjects.

How can I detect self plagiarism?

In the past, staff have suspected self plagiarism in submissions where students have:

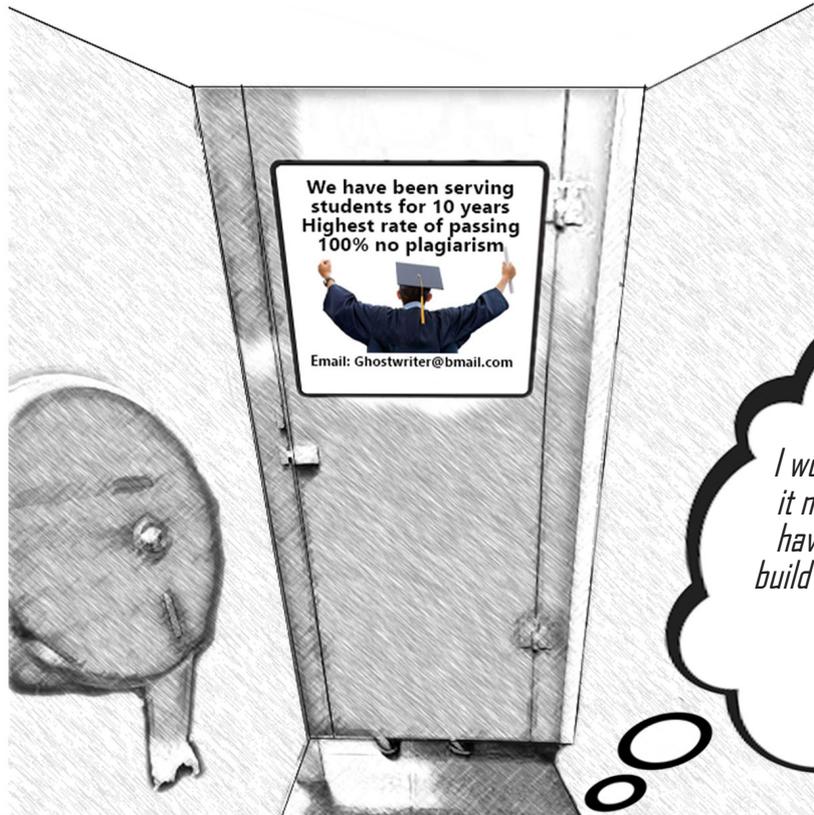
- Explored **familiar ideas** and / or made **similar mistakes**.
- Referred to in class activities that were conducted in **previous semesters**.
- Included **out-of-date content** and / or references (specifically websites)
- Complained about their final grade, suggesting that previous assessor had marked the content more favourably.
- Completed work to a standard that **could not be achieved within the time-frame**.

NB: It is common for students to mistakenly believe that as the 'creator' of original work (essay, design, models, drawings, etc.) they can submit it for assessment multiple times. It is important that staff clearly communicate to students that this not allowed.

What steps should I take?

1. If you are a Tutor, advise the Senior Tutor or Subject Coordinator of your suspicions about the authenticity of a submission.
2. Collect evidence of the suspected misconduct, without accusing the student of engaging in misconduct. This should include:
 - A copy of the student's submission that highlights the suspicious content, *and*
 - The original source* *and / or*
 - Notes from a meeting with the student where they were asked to explain the formation of ideas and/or conclusions.
3. The Senior Tutor or Subject Coordinator should contact ABP Academic Service Office, with evidence, for advice on next steps.

*Details of when / where it was previously submitted for assessment by the student.



Linda is thinking about commissioning someone to help her complete an assessment task.

GHOST WRITING BY ANONYMOUS SERVICE



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Ghost writing is a form of 'contract cheating' that involves students asking for, or accepting an invitation for, someone else to produce work that is submitted for assessment, as their own work. A ghost writer may be commissioned from an anonymous service.

How can I detect ghost writing by an anonymous service?

In the past, staff have suspected the involvement of a ghost writer when the student's submission:

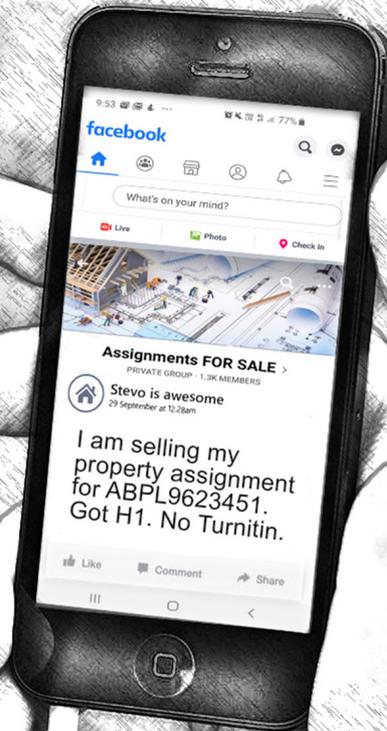
- Significantly **exceeds the standard of work previously submitted**.
- Significantly exceeds staff expectations of the cohort's skill and experience.
- Couldn't reasonably be completed within the time-frame
- Is submitted **quickly after an extension is requested** and / or requested.
- Answers the question without using any in class examples.
- References texts not available in English.
- Is **missing sections**, in particular the requirement for self reflection on the task.
- **Inconsistent language**, tone and / or grammar in different parts of the task.
- The ghost writer has reported the student to the faculty for non payment.

NB: Ghost writers who are commissioned generally create bespoke solutions for assignments making it difficult, but not impossible, to detect.

What steps should I take?

1. If you are a Tutor, advise the Senior Tutor or Subject Coordinator of your suspicions about the authenticity of a submission.
2. Collect evidence of the suspected misconduct, without accusing the student of engaging in misconduct. This should include:
 - A copy of the student's submission that highlights the suspicious content, *and*
 - Other examples of the student's work to set a 'benchmark standard' *and / or*
 - Notes from a meeting with the student where they were asked to explain the formation of ideas *and/or* conclusions.
3. The Senior Tutor or Subject Coordinator should contact ABP Academic Service Office, with evidence, for advice on next steps.

This looks like an opportunity that is worth pursuing, particularly if this past student got a good mark for his assignment and the Lecturer didn't use Turnitin...



Jerome is tempted to buy an assignment off another student who completed the same subject during a previous semester.

PEER SUPPORTED GHOST WRITING



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Ghost writing is a form of 'contract cheating' that involves students asking for, or accepting an invitation for, someone else to produce work that is submitted for assessment, as their own work. A ghost writer may be a student's peer who offers work they have already completed.

How can I detect peer supported ghost writing?

In the past, staff have suspected peer supported ghost writing in assignments that:

- Significantly **exceeds the standard of work previously submitted**.
- Turnitin reports **high or very low percentage of similarity** with other sources. (The 'classic plagiarism' page explains why this signals academic misconduct).
- Significantly exceeds staff expectations of the cohort's skill and experience.
- Couldn't reasonably be completed within the time-frame
- Is submitted **quickly after an extension is requested** and / or requested.
- Answer the question with **examples provided in previous semesters**.
- References websites that are either no longer available, or access dates that are older than three months.
- Is missing sections, in particular the requirement for self reflection on the task
- **Inconsistent language**, tone and / or grammar in different parts of the task.

What steps should I take?

1. If you are a Tutor, advise the Senior Tutor or Subject Coordinator of your suspicions about the authenticity of a submission.
2. Collect evidence of the suspected misconduct, without accusing the student of engaging in misconduct. This should include:
 - A copy of the student's submission that highlights the suspicious content, *and*
 - Other examples of the student's work to set a 'benchmark standard' *and / or*
 - Notes from a meeting with the student where they were asked to explain the formation of ideas *and/or* conclusions.
3. The Senior Tutor or Subject Coordinator should contact ABP Academic Service Office, with evidence, for advice on next steps.



Stephen has agreed to let John use the site plan that he prepared for their design studio.

BORROWING



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Borrowing involves using another student's computer file/s and/or data to make progress on an individual assessment task in a way that would have otherwise impossible. The project brief explicitly states that students cannot collaborate with others. Borrowing is a form of collusion.

How can I detect borrowing?

In the past, staff have suspected students of borrowing content from a peer when two or more assignments:

- Present the **same site context for different design solutions**. For example, the land contours, location and type of landscaping, and details of neighbouring buildings are identical.
- Use the **same data set to support different recommendations**. For example, students sharing calculations for housing density, financial predictions and patterns of transport use.

NB: Borrowing can be difficult for staff to detect. This is because the 'final products' submitted for assessment by two or more students can be **visibly different despite the sharing of critical information**. Staff have a responsibility when setting assessment tasks to clearly explain to students whether or not they can collaborate with their peers.

What steps should I take?

1. If you are a Tutor, advise the Senior Tutor or Subject Coordinator of your suspicions about the authenticity of a submission.
2. Collect evidence of the suspected misconduct, without accusing the student of engaging in misconduct. This should include:
 - Copies of two or more student submissions that highlights the suspicious content, *and*
 - A copy of the assignment brief explicitly stating that students cannot collaborate with others, *and*
 - Notes from a meeting with student/s where they were asked to explain the formation of ideas and/or conclusions.
3. The Senior Tutor or Subject Coordinator should contact ABP Academic Service Office, with evidence, for advice on next steps.



Imani and Zane are in different tutorial groups and think that no one will notice the similarity of their submissions.

Collusion is when more than one student contributes to a piece of individual assessment that is then submitted as the work of an individual. The project brief explicitly states that students cannot collaborate with others.

How can I detect collusion?

In the past, staff have suspected collusion when:

- Two students **used the same construction details** in physical models.
- Turnitin reported **two essays with high similarity scores**.
- Students allocated to a group received **identical scores** on an online quiz.
- A student **took another student's lecture notes** into an open book exam.

NB: Staff have a responsibility when setting assessment tasks to clearly explain to students whether or not they are allowed to collaborate with their peers.

What steps should I take?

1. If you are a Tutor, advise the Senior Tutor or Subject Coordinator of your suspicions about the authenticity of a submission.
2. Collect evidence of the suspected misconduct, without accusing the student of engaging in misconduct. This should include:
 - Copies of two or more student submission that highlights the suspicious content, *and*
 - A copy of the assignment brief explicitly stating that students cannot collaborate with others *and*
 - Notes from a meeting with student/s where they were asked to explain the formation of ideas and/or conclusions.
3. The Senior Tutor or Subject Coordinator should contact ABP Academic Service Office, with evidence, for advice on next steps.



Hi Sally...
This is Elise from the
Academic Support Office. We
have had a student submit a
medical certificate from your
clinic and I am calling to check
the authenticity of
the document.

Elise works in the Academic Support Office. She is calling the medical clinic to request verification that a student's medical certificate is genuine.

FABRICATING INFORMATION



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Fabrication involves students falsifying information that is used as evidence to support a claim. This is fraudulent behaviour and is serious academic misconduct.

How can I detect fabrication?

The following are some of the issues that caused staff to question the validity of a medical certificate:

- Incorrect spelling and poor grammar
- The student is referred by two or more names
- The medical clinic is not in Australia or is online
- The date is not clear
- The official stamp is missing
- The clinic appears to not have a phone number
- The medical professional's registration number is missing
- The font of the typing is inconsistent
- The use of correction tape or white-out pens

What steps should I take?

1. Do not attempt to investigate the authenticity of the documentation provided and do not accuse the student of engaging in misconduct.
2. If you are a Tutor, advise the Senior Tutor or Subject Coordinator of your suspicions about the authenticity of the supplied documentation
3. Collect evidence of the suspected misconduct. This should include copies of:
 - The supplied medical certificate; *and*
 - The student's request for an extension.
4. The Senior Tutor or Subject Coordinator should contact ABP Academic Service Office, with evidence, for advice on next steps.