Six Ideas for Developing Student’s Academic Integrity
[List of Tips and Resources]

At Western, we believe that the most effective strategy for preventing academic misconduct is to *educate* students for academic integrity. How can we facilitate the development of skills, knowledge and commitment of students to study with academic integrity?

We collected some useful resources and ideas:

1. **Classroom discussion**
   Some educators advocate for combatting academic misconduct through tightening surveillance over students with the aid of advanced technologies and equipment (see, for example, [here](#) and [here](#)). Cole and Kiss (2000) refer to this approach as an “arms race”: as universities try to catch cheaters by employing ever more sophisticated software, students invent more ingenious methods to bypass it. Without denying that this approach has some benefits, a long-term cultural change is more likely to occur in an environment where students develop an understanding of why academic integrity is important for them, their personal growth and their future professional career. One thing we can all do is to start our first class with a discussion about academic integrity. There is nothing as powerful as an honest and open conversation. If you would like to use PowerPoint slides, we have developed a template available [here](#) (under “In Class Resources”).

2. **Put it in a real context**
   By practicing academic integrity at university, students strengthen character traits to help them successfully navigate integrity challenges in their future careers. However, from our discussions with students during Academic Integrity Week, it emerged that they often lack a positive understanding of the importance of academic integrity. To the question “Why do you choose not to cheat?”, quite a few replied: “So that I don’t get caught!” We can support students in developing intrinsic motivation for academic integrity by helping them see the relationship between right conduct at university and professional integrity in their future careers.

   You can discuss recent high-profile cases in your professional field to show the consequences of failing to maintain ethical and integrity standards – be it intentionally or unwittingly. For example, if teaching a business class, you can refer to a case like Theranos founder Holmes, former president indicted for fraud ([Reuters](#), 16 June 2018). If you have more examples in mind, please add them in comments to this thread.

3. **Embedded educative activities**
   You can incorporate a Turnitin report activity or a refresher on referencing into your lesson plan in the lead-up to an assignment. For example, the School of Nursing (see [here](#), under “In Class Resources”) implemented an activity in which students work through real-life Turnitin examples that show the different types of plagiarism and how to avoid them.
The School of Social Sciences and Psychology (see here, under “In Class Resources”) embedded practical exercises into their first-year unit to sharpen students’ skills in paraphrasing and summarising, using readings from the unit.

Setting time aside in a tutorial for an academic integrity activity early in the semester helps build confidence in students and raises the probability that they will get it right in their assessments. For teachers, it may save time and effort in marking and commenting on referencing errors and help avoid the need to file academic misconduct cases.

4. Feedback and feedforward for academic integrity
   When marking in Turnitin, consider drawing on the three sets of Study Smart QuickMark comments related to academic integrity and literacy (for a list of comments available and further information, see here, under “Feedback and Feedforward”). These comments have been specially developed for Western Sydney University by a team of library literacy advisors and academics across the Schools who are familiar with the needs of our student cohorts. From the student perspective, the comments are specific and indicate a way to improve. From the staff perspective, using the comments can potentially reduce your marking time as well. For further questions, please contact Dr Claire Urbach (Academic Literacy Advisor) who led this project at c.urbach@westernsydney.edu.au

5. Help is available
   Encourage students to be proactive in seeking help on academic integrity (we know that you have probably done it multiple times!). Practice shows that if students postpone assessments and referencing till the last moment, they are more likely to cheat. Let your students know at the beginning of the semester that proactive help-seeking behaviour is a sign of a mature and responsible learner. We’ve collected useful resources on academic integrity for students that you can share: https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/studysmart/home/academic_integrity_and_plagiarism

6. Ask your students for solutions
   Ask students for ideas on how to build a stronger culture of academic integrity and prevent contract cheating, plagiarism and other academic misconduct. This approach helps turn students into our partners for academic integrity instead of our adversaries. You can submit suggestions generated by your students here or email them directly to academicintegrity@westernsydney.edu.au.

Get in touch with us to tell us about your experiences, best practices and feedback on academic integrity academicintegrity@westernsydney.edu.au