Survey of Deans / Deputy Deans L&T, and Chairs of Assessment Boards

Key people in the implementation of the Academic Integrity Framework are the Deans / Deputy Deans, Learning and Teaching and the Chairs of Assessment Boards. The following questionnaire was forwarded to each of these officers. I then had an appointment with them to collect their responses and their comments.

Ten officers participated in this survey. For the three single Faculty Groups (Business, Health, and Science Environment, Engineering and Technology) the respondent was the Dean, Learning and Teaching who is also the Chair of the Assessment Board. In the Arts, Education and Law Group, for the Humanities and Social Sciences Faculty, the respondent was the Deputy Dean, Learning and Teaching who is also the Chair of the Assessment Board; for the Faculty of Law and the Faculty of Education, the respondents in each Faculty were the Faculty Dean who is the Chair of the Assessment Board, and the Deputy Dean, Learning and Teaching; and for the Queensland Conservatorium, the respondents were the Director who Chairs the Assessment Board and the Deputy Director Learning and Teaching.

In the case of the Queensland College of Art, the Deputy Director Learning and Teaching was invited to respond to the survey. However, after perusing the survey and consulting with other QCA staff, the Deputy Director declined to participate as he was relatively new to the position and had no experience of the Academic Integrity Framework. He also said that the Framework was perceived within the QCA as referring predominantly to print-based activities, and since only around 25% of the assessment at the QCA involved written material, the QCA had considered that the Academic Integrity Framework was of little relevance to them and accordingly they had not given it much attention. Nevertheless, the Deputy Director commented that the problem of plagiarism and dishonest academic conduct in the visual media was a problem to the College and he considered that the QCA needed to engage meaningfully with the issues, and he regretted that they had not done so to date.

The results of the survey are as follows, together with a brief summary of the comments expressed to me. The views of the Deans / Deputy Deans / Assessment Board Chairs are generally consistent. On several questions, the officers in the Law Faculty give responses that diverged from the others, due to specific issues which the Law School has with the Academic Integrity process. These issues are the subject of a note at the end of this report.

Questions about the University-wide processes

1. The Academic Integrity Framework contains strategies for educating students about academic integrity with circumstances in which sanctions for academic misconduct are applied. Do you think the Framework has the balance right?

Too lenient on academic misconduct	1 response
Correct balance	9 responses
Too tough on academic misconduct,	
not enough scope for education	0 responses

Comments: Respondents were most supportive of the overall thrust of the Framework, and applauded the attention given to education and prevention. The divergent response was from Law – see note below.

2. What is your view about the process the University went through to develop the Academic Integrity Framework and trial it for two semesters in selected areas? Please rate your satisfaction with the effectiveness of the process overall.

1 Very Dissatisfied	0 responses
2 Dissatisfied	0 responses
3 Neutral*	1 response
4 Satisfied	6 responses
5 Very satisfied	3 responses

^{*} Point 3 on the response scale was labelled "Neutral, neither satisfied or dissatisfied"

Comments: Respondents were satisfied to very satisfied about the process of developing the Academic Integrity Framework and commended the evidence based approach, reliance on best practice literature and good internal consultation.

3. In Semester 2 2008, the revised process for student academic misconduct was rolled out to all areas of the University. What is your view about the level of support and communication that accompanied the roll out? Please rate your level of satisfaction with the level of support and communication.

1 Very Dissatisfied	0 responses
2 Dissatisfied	0 responses
3 Neutral*	2 responses
4 Satisfied	5 responses
5 Very satisfied	3 responses

Comments: The majority of respondents commented favourably on the roll out of the framework, and were appreciative of the information packs for staff, briefings and presentations at meetings. Comments were made that the system required Course Convenors to be aware, and to be prepared to take action, and the success of the implementation relied on the extent to which Course Convenors were prepared to use the AI Framework in their regular business.

4. In particular, the process for categorising cases of student academic misconduct involves the use of the Seriousness Matrix. Is the Seriousness Matrix an effective tool for achieving consistency? Please rate your level of satisfaction with the Seriousness Matrix as an effective tool.

1 Very Dissatisfied	0 responses
2 Dissatisfied	0 responses
3 Neutral*	1 response
4 Satisfied	9 responses
5 Very satisfied	0 responses

Comments: Respondents were generally satisfied with the Seriousness Matrix as a useful aid to Course Convenors and Chairs of Assessment Boards.

5. What are your views about the role of the Academic Integrity Manager? You may like to comment on your particular experience, but could you also rate your level of satisfaction with the role of the Academic Integrity Manager

1 Very Dissatisfied	1 response
2 Dissatisfied	0 responses
3 Neutral*	1 response
4 Satisfied	2 responses
5 Very satisfied	6 responses

Comments: Most respondents were adamant that the role of the Academic Integrity Manager was critical to the operation of the AI Framework, and cited the importance of central records to keep track of students across programs, and the benefit of standard correspondence and experienced advice. The Law School has issues with the role (see below)

6. What are your views on the administrative processes the Academic Integrity Manager has put in place to support the process of dealing with academic misconduct cases? Please rate your level of satisfaction with the administrative processes.

1 Very Dissatisfied	0 responses
2 Dissatisfied	0 responses
3 Neutral*	2 responses
4 Satisfied	7 responses
5 Very satisfied	1 response

Comments: Although there was general satisfaction, some respondents referred to the burden of paperwork and looked forward to the Academic Integrity Management System as a potential improvement.

^{*} Point 3 on the response scale was labelled "Neutral, neither satisfied or dissatisfied"

7. (For Chairs of Assessment Boards) The Committee of Chairs of Assessment Boards is a relatively recent creation. Please rate the value that this Committee has for you in your role as an Assessment Board Chair

1 response
2 responses
1 response
3 responses
0 responses
(3 not applicable)

Comments: There was a mixed response to this question. Some felt that the Committee was serving a useful function, others thought it had the potential to be considering a wider range of assessment related issues but was not doing that yet; others referred to difficulties in scheduling meetings, poor attendance and general lack of usefulness to them.

Questions Relating to Your Academic Area

8.(a) What do you judge to be the current level of concern among academic staff about student plagiarism?

1 Extremely Low	0 responses
2 Low	1 response
3 Moderate	3 responses
4 High	4 responses
5 Extremely High	2 responses

Comments: A range of responses reflecting different cultures within academic areas as well as difficulties in giving an overall response when individual approaches varied.

8 (b) Do you consider that the Academic Integrity Framework had an effect on the level of concern among academic staff about student plagiarism? Please rate the level of effect.

1 Extremely Negative	0 responses
2 Negative	1 responses
3 No effect	6 responses
4 Positive	3 responses
5 Extremely positive	0 responses

Comments: The majority considered that even though staff generally appreciated the improvements in the processes for handling academic misconduct cases, the level of concern amongst staff was unchanged by the AI Framework. Some considered that the improved confidence in the processes was in itself a positive effect. The Law School's concerns on this question are noted below.

9. There are approaches to assessment that make plagiarism and other forms of student academic misconduct more difficult. To what extent do you think academic staff in your area use assessment practices that are less susceptible to plagiarism?

To a great extent	2 responses
To some extent	3 responses
To very little extent if at all	5 responses

Comments: The majority thought that the approach within their faculty to this issue could be significantly improved.

10. How would you rate your area for promoting academic integrity to students and giving students the knowledge and skills to avoid academic misconduct?

1 Extremely poor	0 responses
2 Poor	0 responses
3 Medium, Average	4 responses
4 Good	4 responses
5 Extremely good	2 responses

Comments: Most respondents considered that they had a good record in this area, and the ones that give a "medium" rating said that there was improvement in recent times and continuing.

11. To what extent do academic staff in your area know what to do when they detect a case of student academic misconduct?

High level of knowledge	3 responses
Some knowledge	7 responses
Very little knowledge	0 responses

Comments: It was considered that staff were generally aware of who to ask or where to go to for advice when a case was experienced.

12. How do you view the number of student academic misconduct cases in your area?

Too high	1 responses
A little high	2 responses
Acceptable	5 responses
Too low, missing too many cases	2 responses

Comments: In two cases, the officer considered that it was most likely that there were significant numbers of academic misconduct cases going undetected in their areas.

13. When student cases arise, some are dealt with by the relevant staff member and some by yourself (Chair of Assessment Board). How satisfied are you with the balance between these two methods?

Not satisfied, more should be dealt with by staff member	0 responses
Satisfied, Balance is correct	8 responses
Not satisfied, more should be dealt with by Assessment Board Chair	1 responses
	(1 not applicable)

Comments: All respondents except for the Law School had no hesitation in responding that the balance was correct. One commented that the staff in their area considered that this balance was a particular strength of the Al Framework.

14. The University has provided text matching software "SafeAssign" through Blackboard, for use by academic staff for assistance in plagiarism prevention and detection. What is the level of use of SafeAssign in your area to date?

High level of use	0 responses
Some level of use	6 responses
Very little use, if at all	4 responses

Comments: The majority of respondents referred to early attempts to encourage the use of SafeAssign within their area, and spoke of potential difficulties to be resolved. Some commented that the technology was not applicable to much of the assessment activity in their areas.

NOTE on Feedback from Law School Officers.

Both the Dean of the Law School and the Deputy Dean Learning and Teaching expressed views to me that they indicated reflected the specific concerns of the Law School. They acknowledged that the Law School had been closely involved in the process of developing the Academic Integrity Framework; nevertheless there are some residual concerns. In brief, these concerns are:

(i) while supporting the approach of making an educative response to certain incidences of academic misconduct, the Law School was nevertheless constrained by the positions of Legal Admission Boards who required all incidences to be reported to them, regardless of whether a penalty was invoked.

(ii) Prior to the AI Framework, all incidences of student academic misconduct were dealt with predominantly by the Dean, whereas under the Framework, the role of Course Convenors was enhanced. This generated two concerns to the Law School – the workload on Course Convenors and consistency.

(iii) The Law School have specific concerns with the role of the Academic Integrity Manager. I am of the view that these concerns need to be resolved and I have referred the issue to the Academic Registrar.

	1	
Arts, Education and Law Group	Dr Catherine Jenkins	Chair Assessment Board, and Deputy Dean (L&T) Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences
	Professor Claire Wyatt-Smith	Chair Assessment Board, and Dean, Faculty of Education
	A/Prof Glenn Finger	Deputy Dean (L&T) Faculty of Education
	Professor Paula Baron	Chair Assessment Board, and Dean, Griffith Law School
	A/Prof Mary Keyes	Deputy Dean (L&T) Griffith Law School
	David Lloyd	Chair Assessment Board, and Deputy Director (L&T) Queensland College of Art (declined to participate in survey – refer to survey report)
	Professor Peter Roennfeldt	Chair Assessment Board, and Director, Queensland Conservatorium
	Dr Don Lebler	Deputy Director (L&T) Queensland Conservatorium
Business Group	Professor Lorelle Frazer	Chair Assessment Board, and Dean (L&T) Griffith Business School
Health Group	Professor Nick Buys	Chair Assessment Board, and Dean (L&T) Griffith Health
Science, Environment, Engineering and Technology Group	David Edwards	Chair Assessment Board, and Dean (L&T) Science, Environment, Engineering and Technology

SURVEY PARTICIPANTS

Survey of Academic Staff

Methodology

A survey of a random sample of academic staff was conducted between March 16 and 19, 2009. The survey was conducted by telephone. Staff who answered their telephone were given information about the review of academic integrity and the survey, and invited to participate. Their responses to the questions were recorded during the telephone conversation. The majority of staff agreed to participate; several excused themselves because they were recent arrivals at the University or were about to go to teach a class.

The number of respondents was 63. The respondent sample included between one and four staff from each School / Department of the University with the exception of the Queensland Conservatorium. Staff from all campuses were represented in the sample. Respondents included Associate Lecturer, Lecturer, Senior Lecturer, Associate Professor and Professor levels, with a weighting towards the junior levels. Staff shown in the telephone directory as being in academic management positions were not included in the sample. Responses were recorded anonymously with only the School / Department /Group of the respondent recorded.

The characteristics of the respondents were:

Academic Group	Number of	Per cent of
	respondents	Sample
Arts, Education and Law	14	22%
Business	14	22%
Health	24	38%
Science, Environment, Engineering and Technology	11	17%
TOTAL	63	100%

Q1. How concerned are you about the problem of plagiarism, academic misconduct, cheating among students?

Responses	Number	Per cent
Serious concern	28	44%
Some concern	20	32%
Mild concern	13	21%
No concern	2	3%
Total	63	100%

Q2. Do you consider the University takes sufficient action to promote academic integrity to students? Please rate your level of satisfaction with the promotion of academic integrity to students.

Responses	Number	Per cent		
1 Very dissatisfied	1	2%		
2 Dissatisfied	11	18%		
3 Neutral (neither satisfied or dissatisfied)	11	18%		
4 Satisfied	32	52%	Total satisfied	63%
5 Very Satisfied	7	11%	(4+5)	
Total	62	100%		

Q3. Do you consider the University takes appropriate action to deal with instances of academic misconduct by students? Please rate your level of satisfaction with the University's response to student academic misconduct.

Responses	Number	Per cent		
1 Very dissatisfied	3	5%		
2 Dissatisfied	6	10%		
3 Neutral (neither satisfied or dissatisfied)	19	31%		
4 Satisfied	27	44%	Total satisfied	55%
5 Very Satisfied	7	11%	(4+5)	
Total	62	100%		

Q4. To what extent do you consider the opportunity for plagiarism and/or other forms of academic misconduct when you design assessment items?

Responses	Number	Per cent
High level of consideration	32	51%
Some consideration	29	46%
Little or no consideration	2	3%
Total	63	100%

Q5. Do you address proper academic writing (citation, attribution) and give students instruction in avoiding plagiarism in your courses?

Responses	Number	Per cent
High amount of attention to these matters	27	43%
Some attention to these matters	23	37%
Reminder about information given elsewhere	8	13%
Rely on information in Course Outline	3	5%
Not addressed	1	2%
(not applicable)	1	2%
Total	63	100%

Q6(a). Have you made use of "SafeAssign", the text matching software available through Blackboard and available to staff for assistance in plagiarism prevention and detection?

Responses	Number	Per cent
Yes (multiple instances of use)	7	11%
Yes (one instance of use)	5	8%
Not yet, but intend to use it	26	41%
Not aware of this package	9	14%
Package not applicable in area	6	10%
Aware but probably will not use	10	16%
Total	63	100%

Q6(b). Have you explicitly advised your students to make use of "SafeAssign", the text matching software available through Blackboard, so that they can submit their drafts to check the level of text matching in their assignments?

Responses	Number	Per cent
Yes	21	33%
No	41	65%
Not aware of package	1	2%
Total	63	100%

Q7. How familiar are you with the action you should take when you become aware of possible academic misconduct by a student?

Responses	<u>Number</u>	Per cent
Very familiar	30	48%
Somewhat familiar	31	49%
No knowledge	2	3%
Total	63	100%

Q8. If you detected possible student academic misconduct, who would you seek advice from?

Responses	Number	Per cent
Dean/Deputy Dean Learning &	24	38%
Teaching		
Head of School / Department	43	68%
Program Convenor / Director	20	32%
An academic colleague	17	27%
An administrator	8	13%

Q9. Are you aware that the University has an Academic Integrity Manager and an Academic Integrity Framework?

Responses	Number	Per cent
Yes	43	68%
Vaguely	15	24%
No	5	8%
Total	63	100%

Q10. Have you dealt with a case of student academic misconduct in the last 12 months?

Responses	Number	Per cent
Yes	25	40%
No	38	60%
Total	63	100%

If yes, were you dealing with the case in terms of the new Academic Integrity Framework?

Responses	Number	Per cent
Yes	14	56%
No	11	44%
Total	25	100%

If yes, how satisfied were you with the process?

Responses	Number	Per cent		
1 Very dissatisfied	1	7%		
2 Dissatisfied	1	7%		
3 Neutral (neither satisfied or dissatisfied)	1	7%		
4 Satisfied	5	36%	Total satisfied	79%
5 Very Satisfied	6	43%	(4+5)	
Total	14	100%		

Summary of Results

Although the sample is small, on most questions there is a majority opinion, and it is reasonable to argue that this is consistent with the majority opinion of the academic staff of the University.

The majority opinions can be summarised as:

- There is concern (some concern to serious concern) about the problem of academic misconduct among students. The response to this question can be interpreted both as indicating that the academic pays a lot of attention to the issue because they are concerned and also that they consider that the rate of occurrence in the student body is significant. The survey did not attempt to distinguish between these two closely related opinions.
- There is general satisfaction with the action the University takes to promote academic integrity to students and there is general satisfaction with the action the University takes to deal with instances of academic misconduct by students. When asking this question, some queried what was meant by "the University" and I replied "action taken by others than yourself, including in your Faculty, Group and across the University". Some respondents expressing dissatisfaction said that their response

was based on their view that the University did not provide sufficient resources to them or their element to deal effectively with the issue.

- The overwhelming majority of staff claim that they give some consideration or a high level of consideration to the opportunities for plagiarism and/or other forms of academic misconduct in the design of their assessment items.
- Most staff give considerable attention to academic writing skills and instruction in avoiding plagiarism in their courses.
- Staff are generally familiar with the action they should take when they become aware of academic misconduct.
- The most common sources of advice in dealing with cases of student academic misconduct are (in order) the Head of School / Department, Dean / Deputy Dean Learning and Teaching, and the Program Convenor.
- Most staff are aware to some extent of the University's Academic Integrity Framework and the existence of the Academic Integrity Manager.

Concerning the use of SafeAssign, the responses are to be expected since the package has been released relatively recently, and has not been heavily promoted to academics. Some respondents expressed that the use of the package put too heavy a load on them. These issues are discussed further in the report.

Concerning the incidence of student academic misconduct in the past 12 months, 40% reported that they had dealt with one or more cases, but not all of these were dealt with under the Academic Integrity Framework (because of the roll out of the trial). However it is noteworthy that, of the 14 staff who responded that they had dealt with a case under the new Academic Integrity Framework, 11 (79%) were satisfied to very satisfied with the process.

Survey of Students

Methodology:

A survey of students was conducted over a number of days from March 11 to March 23 (weeks 2 and 3 of Semester 1). The survey was conducted in person. I approached students around campuses and invited them to participate in the survey. I explained to them the purpose of the survey and gave a brief description of the terms academic integrity and academic misconduct. I displayed the sheet with the questions printed on it, while I read the questions to the student and recorded the responses. The interaction with each student took approximately two minutes. The survey for students for whom this was their first year at the University comprised only two questions and for all other students comprised six questions. I recorded which campus I interviewed the student on, and asked them the program they were undertaking, whether they were an undergraduate or postgraduate student and whether they were an Australian student or international student.

I decided not to include students at South Bank campus on the grounds that Queensland College of Art and Queensland Conservatorium students were less exposed to text based assessment and the application of the Academic Integrity Framework to these students was somewhat different from students at other campuses.

A total of 142 student responses were obtained. The characteristics of the set of respondents are as follows with the relevant ratios for the general student population provided for comparison.

	University population	Survey Population
Postgraduate per cent	19%	8%
International per cent	23%	22%
<u>Campuses</u>		
Gold Coast	39%	42%
Logan	7%	11%
Mt Gravatt	13%	11%
Nathan	33%	37%
South Bank	8%	0%
Group		
Arts, Education, Law	35%	30%
Business	30%	27%
Health	20%	28%
SEET	14%	15%

To students for whom this is their first year of study at Griffith

Q1. Have you been given information about academic integrity / academic misconduct / plagiarism / cheating in the information you have been given by the university so far?

Responses	Number	Per cent
Yes	67	92%
No	6	8%
Total	73	100%

If yes, what were the sources of the information?

Responses	Number	Per cent
Printed material in Enrolment Pack	28	38%
Course Outlines	54	74%
Orientation Session	39	53%
By a lecturer during a lecture or tutorial	60	82%
Other	7	10%

Q2. At this stage, do you think you have a reasonable understanding of what is acceptable and what is unacceptable in terms of assignments you hand in for assessment, and what you have to do to avoid plagiarism?

Responses	<u>Number</u>	Per cent
Yes	70	96%
No	3	4%
Total	73	100%

If yes, what has assisted you in having such an understanding?

Responses	Number	Per cent
Lecturers	33	45%
Course Outline information	14	19%
All sources of information	9	12%
Other (eg, web, preparatory courses, orientation)	7	10%
Sources other than Griffith, such as school, other universities	19	26%

If no, are you aware of action you can take in order to improve your level of understanding?

Of the three "no" responses, two answered "NO" to this question, and one said that they would refer to information on a web site.

To students for whom this is not their first year of study at Griffith

Q1. In your time at the University, have you been given information about academic integrity / academic misconduct / plagiarism / cheating?

Responses	<u>Number</u>	Per cent
Yes	69	100%
No	0	0%
Total	69	100%

If yes, what have been the main sources of this information?

Responses	Number	Per cent
Web site	37	54%
Handouts of printed material	18	26%
Course Outlines	61	88%
Lecturers	61	88%
Learning Services	12	17%
Other	0	0%

Q2. Have you been given appropriate support and training in academic writing skills, proper procedures for quotations, citations and referencing, and careful use of paraphrasing? Can you please rate your satisfaction with the level of support you have been given:

Responses	Number	Per cent		
1 Very dissatisfied	0	0%		
2 Dissatisfied	6	9%		
3 Neutral (neither satisfied or dissatisfied)	17	25%		
4 Satisfied	29	42%	Total satisfied	67%
5 Very Satisfied	17	25%	(4+5)	
Total	69	100%		

Q3. What is your view about students engaging in improper academic behaviour, such as plagiarism, cheating, copying, presenting work that is not their own for assessment? How common or prevalent do you think this behaviour is among students in general?

Responses	Number	Per cent
Extremely prevalent (common)	3	4%
Prevalent (common)	7	10%
Occasional occurrences	46	67%
Not aware of such behaviour (or don't know)	13	19%
Total	69	100%

Q4. Do you think that the staff (Lecturers, tutors) do enough to prevent students from getting away with academic misconduct? Can you please rate your level of satisfaction with the action taken by staff to prevent students from engaging in academic misconduct :

Responses	Number	Per cent		
1 Very dissatisfied	0	0%		
2 Dissatisfied	5	7%		
3 Neutral (neither satisfied or dissatisfied)	15	22%		
4 Satisfied	44	64%	Total satisfied	71%
5 Very Satisfied	5	7%	(4+5)	
Total	69	100%		

Q5. Have any of your lecturers advised you that they use special text matching software (SafeAssign) to detect plagiarism in student assignments?

Responses	Number	Per cent
Yes	51	74%
No	18	26%
Total	69	100%

Q6. Are you aware that Griffith has adopted an Academic Integrity Framework in order to promote academic integrity and prevent plagiarism and other forms of academic misconduct?

Responses	Number	Per cent
Yes	12	17%
No	57	83%
Total	69	100%

Summary for total student sample:

Both groups were asked whether they had been given information about academic integrity and student academic misconduct and the sources of this information. The combined answers to these questions were:

Question (First Years) Have you been given information about academic integrity / academic misconduct / plagiarism / cheating in the information you have been given by the university so far? Question (Later Years) In your time at the University, have you been given information about academic integrity / academic misconduct / plagiarism / cheating?

Responses	Number	Per cent
Yes	136	96%
No	6	4%
Total	142	100%

Sources of information:

Responses	Number	Per cent
Lecturers	121	85%
Course Outlines	115	81%
Enrolment Pack (first years only)	28	20%
Orientation (first years only)	39	27%
Web site (later years only)	37	26%
Printed Handouts (later years only)	18	13%
Learning Services (later years only)	12	8%
Other	7	5%
Total respondents	142	

Summary of Results

Although the sample is small, on most questions there is a majority opinion, and it is reasonable to argue that this is consistent with the opinion of the majority of students of the University.

The most pleasing result is that the overwhelming majority of students, including students who have been at the university for only two or three weeks, report that they have received information about academic integrity, academic misconduct and plagiarism. In fact some students when answering questions commented on the high amount of such information and its repetition. Students in their early weeks of their first year of study overwhelmingly considered that they had a good idea of what they had to do to avoid plagiarism in their assignments.

The lecturers and the course outlines were most frequently cited as the sources of the information.

The survey of students who were not in their first year of study indicated that

- they were generally satisfied with the support for academic writing skills;
- the majority thought that academic misconduct among students was occasional rather than prevalent;
- they were generally satisfied with the actions of academic staff to prevent student academic misconduct;
- the level of awareness of SafeAssign was surprisingly high;
- the level of recognition of the terminology "Academic integrity Framework" was relatively low.