**COIT20249 Assignment 3 Report Title Page**

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| Unit code | COIT20249 |
| Unit name | Professional Skills in ICT |
| Assessment number | 3 |
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| Extension ID (if applicable) |  |
| New due date (if applicable) |  |

**Please read this document, and sign at the bottom of this document.**

COIT20249 has seen many academic misconduct cases. This is certainly not something that we are proud of. Over the years, despite the conscientious effort the faculty has put in to educate students on academic integrity and the various preventive measures the faculty has taken, unfortunately we have seen students repeating the same forms of academic misconduct over and over again.

We acknowledge that students, especially students from a different educational background/system, may have inadvertently committed academic misconduct not because they have an intention to cheat but because of the lack of a correct understanding of what might constitute academic misconduct under the [*Student Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure*](https://www-search.cqu.edu.au/s/redirect?collection=policy&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cqu.edu.au%2Fpolicy%2Fsharepoint-document-download%3Ffile_uri%3D%257BBE8380F3-F86D-4C55-AC0D-84A81EAFD6A2%257D%2FStudent%2520Academic%2520Integrity%2520Policy%2520and%2520Procedure%2520%28current%2520version%2520from%2520March%25202020%29.pdf&auth=zw0RNND4nGEOvuYh6OK1Lg&profile=_default&rank=1&query=student+academic) (the ‘Policy’) at CQU. We therefore wish to use this assignment title page as an instrument to dispel some of the common myths about academic misconduct. In this document, we present you with a number of common scenarios in which an academic misconduct can be alleged. We require you to read these scenarios and the explanations followed by each scenario. We then require you to sign at the end of this document as a manifested acknowledgement that you have read and understand this document.

**Myths 1 - “I had a low Turnitin score”**

**Scenario:** James copied Peter’s work in an individual assignment and submitted the assignment before Peter. Assured with a low Turnitin score, James went ahead and submitted his assignment. However, once Peter submitted, the Turnitin score of James’ submission increased to over 80%. Both students had academic misconduct cases raised against them. When asked to respond to the allegation, James denied any academic misconduct, stating that his Tunitin score was low when he first submitted his assignment.

**Explanation:** Many students, once reported for academic misconduct, would say that they had a low Turnitin when they first submitted their assignments. Please be advised that low Turnitin scores do not automatically make you immune from academic misconduct. Turnitin scores are also subject to change, that is, subsequent submissions may cause the Turnitin score of any previous submissions to increase. Therefore, the initial Turnitin similarity score has no bearing on the degree of similarity of your submission with other students’ submissions because it is likely that not all students have submitted by the time you submit yours.

**Myth 2 - “I wrote it myself, they copied mine”**

**Scenario:** James and Peter are very good friends. They live in the same house. James got stuck in an individual assessment, and asked Peter for his completed assignment to “just have a look”. He promised Peter that he would not copy his work. Later Turnitin showed a very high similarity score and both had academic misconduct cases raised against them. When asked to respond to the allegation, Peter denied any academic misconduct, stating that he wrote this assignment himself and it was James who copied his work.

**Explanation:** Both students are guilty of misconduct in this case (s3.37 of the Policy). Peter, because he shared his work; and James for submitting something he did not totally (or partially) write on his own. In particular, Peter’s conduct constitutes academic misconduct, and the fact that he completed his assignment on his own is not a defence or a mitigating factor. Students are advised that providing an unfair academic advantage to other persons equally constitutes academic.

**Myth 3 - “I do not know what happened, but we share the same computer”**

**Scenario:** James and Peter are very good friends. They live in the same house. They also share the same laptop without separate password-protected accounts. Turnitin shows a very high similarity score for their individual assignment, and the Turnitin reports show they have colluded with each other. In an academic misconduct interview, both James and Peter claimed they did not know what happened, and they could not explain the unacceptably high similarity between the two submissions. In the interview, they acknowledged that they shared the same laptop, they stored their assignments on the same laptop, and they did not have separate password-protected accounts.

**Explanation:** You do not need to proffer your assignment to other students for there to be an academic misconduct, as long as your action or omission to act is foreseeably likely to provide an unfair academic advantage to other persons/yourself, then your action or omission to act can be regarded as academic misconduct. In this particular scenario, failure to protect your assignment with separate password-protected login accounts on a computer, especially with the knowledge that other students using the same computer are undertaking the same assignment, is foreseeably likely to provide an unfair academic advantage to other students. Therefore, the omission to act (i.e. to set up password-protected accounts) constitutes academic misconduct. Similar actions/omission to act also include:

* Printing out your completed/draft assignment and leaving it in the classroom where all other students have access to.
* Not locking your account on a computer with which you use to complete your assignment and leaving your computer unattended in a room of students undertaking the same assignment for an extended period of time.
* Publishing your assignment solution on the internet which can be found by a search engine.

**Myth 4 - “My friends/brother/sister helped me, and I did not pay them”**

**Scenario:** James, who is not a native English speaker. submitted an assignment that appeared to have been written professionally by a native English speaker. In responding to an allegation of academic misconduct, James stated that the assignment was too difficult, and he asked his friends for some help. He insisted that what he did was not academic misconduct because he did not pay his friends to help him, and it was just some help from his friends.

**Explanation:** If you engage a third party (e.g. friends, family member, assignment writing service) to write whole or part of your assignment and submit it as if it were completely written by you, you may be reported for academic misconduct (s3.42 of the Policy). It is immaterial to consider whether you pay for that service or not.

**Myth 5 - "Synonym-replacement is the solution"**

**Scenario**: James copied entire paragraphs word for word from the Internet and use it in his assignment without acknowledgement. Worried that the verbatim copy was likely to be detected by Turnitin, James replaced most words in those paragraphs with their synonyms. For example, James turned this sentence "the following example demonstrates the Simple Mail Transfer Protocol (SMTP)" into "the ensuing sample establishes the Humble Parcel Move Procedure (SMTP)". James submitted his assignment and received an extremely low Turnitin score. He was later reported for academic misconduct. When asked to respond, James said that he could not have an academic misconduct case raised against him because of the low Turnitin score.

**Explanation**: Reducing Turnitin similarity score by simply replacing words with their synonyms is an act that aims to disguise academic misconduct (s3.33 of the Policy). Synonym-replacement is normally regarded as an aggravating factor in an academic misconduct report because not only have the student knowingly committed an academic misconduct and they have also gone to great lengths to disguise the misconduct. Students are advised that synonym-replacement is NOT the solution to plagiarism, and low Turnitin similarity score is almost never a legitimate excuse in an academic misconduct.

**Myth 6 - "the marker will not have the time to check for references, I will randomly place in-text references in the body of my report to show I have done some research"**

**Scenario**: James used the following in-text reference in his Report and an academic misconduct case was raised on the basis of a falsified citation. “Machine learning is an active and exiting field; its applications can be found in various industries. 83% of the businesses in Australia have claimed that they have implemented machine learning applications. This Report will explore the various types of machine learning, its applications in education, e-commerce, transport industry. This Report will also explore the ethical, legal and social issues of the application of machine learning to offer personalised recommendations on online retail stores (Sun, 2013).”

Sun, S. (2013). A review of deterministic approximate inference techniques for Bayesian machine learning. Neural Computing and Applications, 23(7-8), 2039-2050.

**Explanation**: We have seen many students use falsified citations in COIT20249 Report Assignment, that is, the in-text references have little or no bearing on the preceding sentence or the context where they were placed. For example, the use of Sun (2013) in the scenario above constitutes academic misconduct. Sun (2013) has no bearing on the context where the reference is placed and is thus an example of falsified citation (s3.41 of the Policy). That both the paragraph and Sun (2013) are on the same topic (viz. machine learning) does NOT automatically make Sun (2013) more appropriate to be used as a reference for the paragraph than a reference discussing e.g. how to cure cancer.

Falsified citations have no place in COIT20249. Markers had been in the past and will continue to be instructed to randomly check references in the Report submissions. In T3 2019, COIT20249 introduced an additional academic quality assurance mechanism whereby you are required to attend a viva voce in Week 11 and 12 for the School to verify your understanding of the references used in your Report, increasing the chance for the detection of falsified citations or other forms of academic misconduct. This practice will continue in T1 2020. It is strongly recommended that you attend an ALC workshop on referencing and also make an appointment with the ALC to get your assignments checked before submitting to avoid academic misconduct.

**Student Declaration**

In the textbox below, type in the following words: “*I acknowledge that I have read and understand the scenarios and explanation in this document and my responsibility to upload academic integrity under the Student Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure*”.

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| I acknowledge that I have read and understand the scenarios and explanation in this document and my responsibility to upload academic integrity under the Student Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure. |

In the textbox below, type in the following words: “*I confirm that the Report submission is solely and completely my own work. I have not used any falsified citations in the Report submission, nor have I committed any other forms of academic misconduct under the Student Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure*”.

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| I confirm that the Report submission is solely and completely my own work. I have not used any falsified citations in the Report submission, nor have I comitted any other forms of academic misconduct under the Student Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure. |

In the textbox below, type in the following words: “*I understand that this title page will also be submitted to the University if I am reported for academic misconduct*”.

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| I understand that this title page will also be submitted to the University if I am reported for academic misconduct. |

In the textbox below, type your name and date as an electronic signature.

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| Bishal Budhathoki, 22/05/2020 |