Academic Misconduct Policy – Sample Template letters

The following are suggested sample template letters to students that cover most (but not all) formal communications to students required by the Misconduct – Student Academic Misconduct Policy.

Note – there are particular requirements for communications if the student is an overseas national, holding a visa for study in Australia, and if he or she is being failed in a unit, suspended or excluded, as part of a disciplinary penalty.

Template 1 – Unit Coordinator (UC) letter to student advising of allegation and meeting
Template 2 – UC letter to student who attended meeting – 1st Minor Breach
Template 3 – UC letter to student who did not attend meeting – 1st Minor Breach
Template 4 – UC memo of advice to HOS, referring a case of substantial, or suspected substantial, academic misconduct
Template 5 - UC letter to student – referred to HOS – allegation of substantial academic misconduct
Template 6 – Head of School (HoS) letter inviting student to discuss allegation
Template 7 – HOS advice to student that allegation is being referred to College
Academic Standards and Integrity Committee (CASIC)
Template 8 – HOS letter to student advising outcome of meeting
Template 9 – HOS letter referring matter to CASIC Chair
Template 10 – Chair of CASIC letter inviting student to hearing
Template 11 – Registrar advises student that CASIC has upheld penalty
Template 12 – Registrar advises student that CASIC has dismissed allegation
Template 13 - Request to PVC (L&T) to ratify CASIC recommendation
Template 14 – Advice of Academic Senate Academic Standards and Integrity Committee (SASIC) outcome – example for visa holding student
Template 15 – Chair of SASIC letter inviting student to hearing.
Dear [insert student’s name],

As Unit Coordinator of [insert unit code and unit name], I am writing to advise that an allegation has been made that you have engaged in academic misconduct and that you may be in breach of the University’s Student Academic Misconduct Policy.

It is alleged that you [insert details of allegation, including unit name and number, nature of alleged offence, assignment name and date of submission, or date of examination, where appropriate].

A copy of the information provided to me is enclosed, and, as required by the Student Academic Misconduct Policy, I invite you to respond to this material in writing.

The Policy requires me to meet with you to discuss the allegation and the evidence supporting it. I have set up a meeting for this purpose, the details of which follow. [Insert name of Teacher of Unit], the Teacher of the Unit, will also be attending the meeting.

Date: [insert date of meeting]
Time: [insert time of meeting]
Place: [insert details of the venue]
Contact: [insert details of staff member student should contact, if necessary]

I enclose a copy of the information that will be considered at the meeting.

Please contact me within seven days to advise whether or not you will be attending the meeting. Note that, if you fail to attend, the matter will be considered in your absence.

You may arrange to be assisted at the meeting by a support person. This person must be a fellow enrolled student, a member of University staff (e.g. one of your teachers or a Student Welfare Officer) or an officer of a University student association. They may advise you, but may not act as your advocate or make direct comment in the meeting, unless, as the convenor of the meeting, I give permission for them to do so.

The Student Academic Misconduct Policy can be accessed from this link on the University’s website http://policies.uws.edu.au/view.current.php?id=00051#s1.

Yours sincerely,

[insert name of Unit Coordinator]
Unit Coordinator

[insert name of School]
College of [insert name of College]
Tel: (02) [insert phone no.] Fax: (02) [insert fax no.]
Dear [insert student’s name]

As Unit Coordinator of [insert unit code and unit name], I met with you on [insert date] to discuss an allegation that you had engaged in academic misconduct.

I have concluded that your work demonstrated a first minor breach of the University’s Student Academic Misconduct Policy.

I have decided to impose the penalty of [insert details of penalty e.g. “reducing your mark for the assessment item to ….”].

The reason for this determination is that [insert brief reason/s for decision - may include reference to any mitigating factors, if relevant. For example “…the assignment you submitted contained material you obtained from web sites, without appropriate referencing. I have taken into account that you admitted you were short of time when you prepared the assignment, should have requested an assignment extension”. I have also taken into account that you are in your first session of enrolment at UWS”.]

[[Delete or change this paragraph as required.] “I strongly recommend you seek advice about how to reference appropriately / study skills etc etc….from XXXXX”]

This breach of the Student Academic Misconduct Policy will be noted on your student file and any further breach of the Policy will be dealt with as a substantial one, unless it is a minor breach and you are still in your first session of study at UWS.

The Student Academic Misconduct Policy can be accessed from this link on the University’s website https://policies.uws.edu.au/view.current.php?id=00051#s1. Any appeal against my decision must be made to the Head of School responsible for teaching the unit, in accordance with Part B of the Policy. Part B also covers the grounds on which you may appeal my determination.

Yours sincerely,

[insert name of Unit Coordinator]  
Unit Coordinator
Dear [insert student’s name],

As Unit Coordinator of [insert unit code and unit name], I invited you to meet with me on [insert date] to discuss an allegation that you had engaged in academic misconduct. As you did not attend this meeting, the matter was considered in your absence.

I have decided to impose the penalty of [insert details of penalty e.g. “reducing your mark for the assessment item to …..”].

The reason for this determination is that [insert brief reason/s for decision may include reference to any mitigating factors, if relevant. For example “…the assignment you submitted contained material you obtained from web sites, without appropriate referencing. I have taken into account that you in your first session of enrolment at UWS.”]

([Delete or change this paragraph as required.] “I strongly recommend you seek advice about how to reference appropriately / study skills etc etc….from XXXXX”).

This breach of the Student Academic Misconduct Policy will be noted on your student file and any further breach of the Policy will be dealt with as a substantial one, unless it is a minor breach and you are still in your first session of study at UWS.

The Student Academic Misconduct Policy can be accessed from this link on the University’s website http://policies.uws.edu.au/view.current.php?id=00051#s1. Any appeal against my decision must be made to the Head of School responsible for teaching the unit, in accordance with Part B of the Policy. Part B also covers the grounds on which you may appeal my determination.

Yours sincerely,

[insert name of Unit Coordinator]
Unit Coordinator
Dear [insert HOS's name]

RE: Referral of Case of Substantial [or “Suspected Substantial”] Student Academic Misconduct for Your Consideration

I received an allegation that [insert student’s name and SID] had [give brief details of alleged breach].

Following an investigation, I have concluded that the student has [or “may have”] committed a substantial breach of the Student Academic Misconduct Policy.

In accordance with the Policy, I am therefore referring the matter to you for consideration.

I attach [insert details of relevant attachments, including UC’s report of investigation]

Regards
[insert name]
Dear [insert student’s name],

As Unit Coordinator of [insert unit code and unit name], I invited you to attend a meeting with me on [insert date] to discuss an allegation that you had engaged in academic misconduct. Following your [insert either “attendance” or “non-attendance”] at the meeting, I have concluded that your work demonstrated a substantial breach of the University’s Student Academic Misconduct Policy, and have therefore referred the allegation to the Head of School, for further consideration.

The Student Academic Misconduct Policy can be accessed from this link on the University’s website http://policies.uws.edu.au/view.current.php?id=00051#s1.

You will be contacted by the Head of School in due course.

Yours sincerely,
[insert name of Unit Coordinator]
Unit Coordinator [unit number]
School of [insert name of School]
College of [insert name of College]
Template 6 – HOS letter inviting student to discuss allegation or student’s appeal

School of [insert name of School]
College of [insert name of College]
Tel: (02) [insert phone no.] Fax: (02) [insert fax no.]

[insert date]
SID: [insert SID]
[insert student’s name]
[insert street address]
[insert suburb, state and postcode]

Dear [insert student’s name]

I am writing to invite you to a meeting with me, as Head of the School of [insert name of school] and a nominee of the Registrar, to discuss an allegation of academic misconduct, as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date:</th>
<th>[insert date of meeting]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Time:</td>
<td>[insert time of meeting]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Place:</td>
<td>[insert details of the venue]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allegation</td>
<td>[insert details of allegation including unit name and number, nature of alleged offence, assignment name and date of submission, or date of examination, where appropriate]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[This invitation follows my receipt of details of the allegation from the Unit Coordinator for [insert unit code and unit name]. A copy of the information provided to me is enclosed, and, as required by the Student Academic Misconduct Policy, I invite you to respond to this material in writing.]

OR

[This invitation follows my receipt of your appeal against the disciplinary determination of [insert disciplinary penalty] made by the Unit Coordinator for [insert unit code and unit name] when he/she considered the allegation.]

A copy of the information provided to me is enclosed, and, as required by the Student Academic Misconduct Policy, I invite you to respond to this material in writing.

Please contact me within seven days to advise whether or not you will attend the meeting. If you do not attend, I will make an appropriate decision about the matter in your absence.

You may arrange to be assisted at the meeting by a support person. This person must be a fellow enrolled student, a member of University staff (e.g. one of your teachers or a Student Welfare Officer) or an officer of a University student association. They may advise you, but may not act as your advocate or make direct comment in the meeting, unless, as the convenor of the meeting, I give permission for them to do so.

The Student Academic Misconduct Policy can be accessed from this link on the University’s website http://policies.uws.edu.au/view.current.php?id=00051#s1. The meeting will be conducted in accordance with the Policy, beginning at clause (39).

Yours sincerely,

[insert name of Head of School]
Head of School
Template 7 – HOS advice to student that allegation is being referred to College Academic Standards and Integrity Committee

School of [insert name of School]
College of [insert name of College]
Tel: (02) [insert phone no.] Fax: (02) [insert fax no.]

[insert date]

SID: [insert SID]

[insert student’s name]
[insert street address]
[insert suburb, state and postcode]

Dear [insert student’s name]

It has been alleged that you engaged in academic misconduct in [insert unit code and unit name] and that you may be in breach of the University's Student Academic Misconduct Policy.

The allegation was that you [insert details of allegation, including unit names and numbers, assignment names and dates of submission, or date of examination, where appropriate].

Following [insert either “your attendance at a meeting” or “your failure to attend a meeting”] with me on [insert date] to discuss the allegation, I am writing to advise that I am now referring the matter to the College of [insert name of College] Academic Standards and Integrity Committee. That is because I consider the allegation sufficiently serious and substantial to warrant consideration by the Committee which can, if it finds the allegation substantiated, impose a more severe penalty than is available to me.

The Secretary of the Committee will be in contact with you shortly.

The Student Academic Misconduct Policy can be accessed from this link on the University’s website http://policies.uws.edu.au/view.current.php?id=00051#s1.

Yours sincerely

[insert name of Head of School]
Head of School
Addendum 1 for Template 8 and others, as appropriate

HOS - Wording for outcome letter to visa holding students

To be included in any letter from Head of School advising of a penalty of fail unit, or downgrade of marks in as assessment item, which may lead to the student failing the unit.

Please note: This determination may affect your condition of enrolment, and therefore, your visa. Please contact the International Office to discuss this. Please also contact your Head of Program to discuss your pattern of study.
School of [insert name of School]
College of [insert name of College]
Tel: (02) [insert phone no.] Fax: (02) [insert fax no.]

[insert date]

SID: [insert SID]

[insert student’s name]
[insert street address]
[insert suburb, state and postcode]

Dear [insert student’s name]

It was alleged that you engaged in academic misconduct in [insert unit code and unit name] and that you may be in breach of the University’s Student Academic Misconduct Policy.

The allegation was that you [insert details of allegation, including unit names and numbers, assignment names and dates of submission, or date of examination, where appropriate].

Following [insert either “your attendance” at a meeting or “your failure to attend a meeting”] with me on [insert date] to discuss the allegation, I am writing to advise you that, having considered all evidence available to me, I have concluded that the allegation is proven.

I have decided to impose the penalty of [insert details of penalty from range in Policy e.g. “downgrading your final grade in unit XXXX attempted in session XXXX”].

The reason for this determination is that [insert brief reason/s for decision - may include mitigation. For example “…the assignment you submitted contained material you obtained from web sites, without appropriate referencing.”]

This breach of the Student Academic Misconduct Policy will be noted on your student file and any further breach of the Policy will be dealt with as a subsequent substantial breach.

The Student Academic Misconduct Policy can be accessed from this link on the University’s website http://policies.uws.edu.au/view.current.php?id=00051#s1.

The Policy allows you to appeal my decision. Part B of the Policy covers the grounds for appealing my determination. If you wish to make an appeal, it must be made to the Chair of the relevant College Academic Standards and Integrity Committee, via the Committees Officer of the College of [insert College name], Academic Secretariat, Locked Bag 1797, Penrith 2751, within fifteen working days [or, if the student is a student visa holder, substitute “within twenty working days”] of the date of this letter.

[If the student is an overseas national, holding a visa for study in Australia, include the following text if the penalty is a fail in the unit, or a downgraded mark for an assessment task that will lead to a failure in the unit:

“Please note: This determination may affect your condition of enrolment, and therefore, your visa. Please contact the International Office to discuss this. Please also contact your Head of Program to discuss your pattern of study.”]

Yours sincerely

[insert name of Head of School]

Head of School
School of [insert name of School]
College of [insert name of College]
Tel: (02) [insert phone no.] Fax: (02) [insert fax no.]

Dear [Chair's name]

On [insert date], I called a meeting with [insert student name and number], [insert names of any academic staff who attended] and a representative of the Registrar to discuss an allegation of student academic misconduct.

The allegation was that the student [insert details of allegation, including unit names and numbers, assignment names and dates of submission, or date of examination, where appropriate]. [Insert either “The student attended the meeting”. or “The student did not attend the meeting”.]

[If the student attended the meeting, insert: “From investigation, I have concluded that, at the meeting, (briefly describe outcome of meeting), etc …”]

As the allegation is a very serious one, I am referring it to the College of [insert name of College] Academic Standards and Integrity Committee for consideration.

The following documents relevant to the allegation and my investigation of it are enclosed:

- [list documents]

Yours sincerely,

[insert name of Head of School]

Head of School

Enc.
Dear [insert student's name],

The College of [insert name of College] Academic Standards and Integrity Committee has received a report from [insert name], Head of the School of [insert School name] regarding an allegation that you [insert details of allegation, including unit names and numbers, assignment names and dates of submission, or date of examination, where appropriate].

In accordance with the University’s Student Academic Misconduct Policy, the Head of School has referred this matter to the College Academic Standards and Integrity Committee because [he/she] considers the allegation is sufficiently substantial and serious that it may warrant more severe penalties that are available to [him/her].

A hearing of this allegation will be held on [insert time and date] at [insert place].

You are encouraged to attend the hearing so that you may respond in person to any questions or observations that may arise. You need to be aware that oral or written information provided to the Committee will be available to all Committee members. If you believe certain information to be so sensitive that it should not be disclosed, you should discuss this with me before the hearing, and I will determine whether or not the information should remain confidential to me. If I determine that the information should not remain confidential, you will be given the opportunity to withdraw the information from the Committee's consideration.

You may arrange to be assisted at the meeting by a support person. This person must be a fellow enrolled student, a member of University staff (e.g. one of your teachers or a Student Welfare Officer) or an officer of a University student association. They may advise you, but may not act as your advocate or make direct comment in the meeting, unless, as the convenor of the meeting, I give permission for them to do so.

If you wish to attend the hearing, you need to confirm your attendance in writing to the Committees Officer of the College of [insert College name], Academic Secretariat, Locked Bag 1797, Penrith 2751, within seven (7) working days of the date of this letter. If you choose not to appear at this hearing, you may make a written submission addressed to me as Chair, via the Committees Officer, for consideration by the College Academic Standards and Integrity Committee.

The College Academic Standards and Integrity Committee will consider evidence contained in the attachments to this letter, pertaining to the allegation against you and make a recommendation for determination to the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching) for ratification. The Registrar will advise you of the Committee's decision.

The Student Academic Misconduct Policy can be accessed from this link on the University’s website http://policies.uws.edu.au/view.current.php?id=00051#s1.

Yours sincerely,

[insert name]
Chair of the College of [insert name of College] Academic Standards and Integrity Committee
Template 11 – Registrar advises student that College Academic Standards and Integrity Committee has determined a penalty

[insert date]

SID: [insert SID]

[insert student’s name]
[insert street address]
[insert suburb, state and postcode]

Dear [insert student’s name]

The College of [insert name of College] Academic Standards and Integrity Committee met on [insert date] to consider the matter of your alleged [insert misconduct type] in the ["assignment" or “formal examination"] [assignment title if relevant], ["submitted “ or “undertaken” “on ....“ - insert date of submission or exam, as appropriate] in unit [insert unit code and name].

In accordance with the University’s Student Academic Misconduct Policy, the Committee determined that the allegation was proven and that a penalty should be applied. This determination has been ratified by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching), and is as follows:

[insert details of penalty]

The reason for this determination is that [insert brief reason/s - may include mitigating factors taken into account]. [Additional information: e.g., “no information was provided by you against the allegation” or “Your claim that there were mitigating circumstances was also considered”].

The Policy allows you to appeal the decision of the College Academic Standards and Integrity Committee – see the Student Academic Misconduct Policy at this link on the University’s website http://policies.uws.edu.au/view.current.php?id=00051#s1

If you wish to make an appeal, it must reach the following person within fifteen [“twenty days” if a student visa holding student] working days of the date of this letter:

Executive Officer
Senate Academic Standards and Integrity Committee
Academic Secretariat
University of Western Sydney
Locked Bag 1797
PENRITH NSW 2751

[If the student is an overseas national, holding a visa for study in Australia, include the following text if the penalty is a fail in the unit, or a downgraded mark for an assessment task that will lead to a failure in the unit:]

“Please note: This determination may affect your condition of enrolment, and therefore, your visa. Please contact the International Office to discuss this. Please also contact your Head of Program to discuss your pattern of study.]

Yours sincerely

Thea Seabrook
Registrar
Template 12 – Registrar advises student that CASIC has dismissed allegation

[insert date]

SID: [insert SID]

[insert student’s name]
[insert street address]
[insert suburb, state and postcode]

Dear [insert student’s name]

The matter of your alleged academic misconduct in the unit [insert unit number and name] was considered by the College of [insert name of College] Academic Standards and Integrity Committee on [insert date].

I am pleased to advise that, after considering the evidence presented, the College Academic Standards and Integrity Committee determined that the allegation could not be substantiated. Accordingly, no penalty will be imposed and your student record will bear no record or notation of this allegation and hearing process.

Thank you for your cooperation and patience in this matter.

Yours sincerely

Thea Seabrook
Registrar
Template 13 - Request to PVC (L&T) to ratify CASIC recommendation

Memorandum

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>[insert date]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To</td>
<td>Professor [insert name]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From</td>
<td>[insert name]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Committees Officer - College of [insert college]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject</td>
<td>Academic Misconduct – Request to Ratify CASIC Recommendation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dear Professor [insert name]

The College of [insert name of College] Academic Standards and Integrity Committee met on [insert date] to consider a number of allegations of student academic misconduct.

In accordance with the University’s Student Academic Misconduct Policy, the Committee recommends that you ratify the recommendations, contained in the attached report, in relation to the following matters:

[insert SID, student name, session of study]
[insert SID, student name, session of study]
[insert SID, student name, session of study]
[insert SID, student name, session of study]

Upon receipt of your concurrence or otherwise, I will initiate the notification process as prescribed within the policy.

Yours faithfully

[insert name]
Committees Officer

Att.
Dear [insert student’s name]

I refer to the appeal dated [insert date] you submitted to the Senate Academic Standards and Integrity Committee against the determination of the College of [insert name of College] Academic Standards and Integrity Committee. As a consequence of [insert type of misconduct] committed by you on [insert date] in the unit [insert unit code and unit name], the Committee determined to impose the following penalty:

- [insert penalty]

Decision

The Senate Academic Standards and Integrity Committee met on [insert date] to consider the circumstances of the allegation as presented by you.

I advise that the Senate Academic Standards and Integrity Committee has decided to [insert full details of decision].

In accordance with the UWS Student Academic Misconduct Policy, the decision has been ratified by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic and Research).

Reasons

[insert brief reasons as given by the SASIC]

For visa holding students only - Visa Implications

“As you are a visa holding student I provide the following advice in accordance with the National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students (the National Code 2007):

(if suspended or excluded)

- As your period of [suspension/exclusion] is more than 28 days a student who is suspended or excluded from the University must leave Australia unless there are compassionate and compelling circumstances that require the student to remain onshore. Matters of this nature are assessed by the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (the Department). You are encouraged to contact the Department’s website or Helpline (telephone 131881) to clarify your visa status as a consequence of your change of enrolment status. Each student’s situation will be assessed individually in accordance with the Department’s policies relating to student visas. There is no automatic visa cancellation for suspension from the University.

The appeal mechanism pursuant to the UWS Student Academic Misconduct Policy is now exhausted. However, the University’s Complaint’s Resolution Unit may investigate complaints regarding whether the University has applied its policies and procedures appropriately (refer to the following url on the University’s website:
Complainants must provide substantive evidence in support of their claim. If you seek an internal review the request must be made within 20 working days from the date of this letter.

In addition, in accordance with the National Code 2007, you may submit an external appeal to the New South Wales Ombudsman (the Ombudsman) if you consider that the University has not followed its published policies and procedures in relation to the allegation of academic misconduct. You may lodge such an appeal to the Ombudsman (telephone: 9286 1000). If you intend to submit such an appeal you are required to immediately advise the University's ESOS Compliance Officer, XXXXXX of your intention (email address xxxx@uws.edu.au).”

Yours faithfully

[insert name]
Secretary
Senate Academic Standards and Integrity Committee
(on behalf of the Registrar)

cc Chair/Secretary of (College) Academic Standard and Integrity Committee/ ESOS Compliance Officer/UWS International

(Name/address of student)

(on behalf of the Academic Registrar)

(Date)
cc Chair/Secretary of (College) Academic Standards and Integrity Committee/Manager, Enrolments
Dear [insert student’s name]

The Senate Academic Standards and Integrity Committee has received your appeal against a finding of student academic misconduct by the College Academic Standards and Integrity Committee College of [insert name of College]

A hearing of your appeal will be held on [insert time and date] at [insert place].

You are encouraged to attend the hearing so that you may respond in person to any questions or observations that may arise. You need to be aware that oral or written information provided to the Committee will be available to all Committee members. If you believe certain information to be so sensitive that it should not be disclosed, you should discuss this with me before the hearing, and I will determine whether or not the information should remain confidential to me. If I determine that the information should not remain confidential, you will be given the opportunity to withdraw the information from the Committee’s consideration.

You may arrange to be assisted at the meeting by a support person. This person must be a fellow enrolled student, a member of University staff (e.g. one of your teachers or a Student Welfare Officer) or an officer of a University student association. They may advise you, but may not act as your advocate or make direct comment in the meeting, unless, as the convenor of the meeting, I give permission for them to do so.

If you wish to attend the hearing, you need to confirm your attendance in writing to the Executive Officer, Academic Senate, Academic Secretariat, Locked Bag 1797, Penrith 2751, within seven (7) working days of the date of this letter. If you choose not to appear at this hearing, you may make a written submission addressed to me as Chair, via the Executive Officer, for consideration by the Senate Academic Standards and Integrity Committee.

The Senate Academic Standards and Integrity Committee will consider evidence contained in the attachments to this letter, pertaining to the allegation against you and make a recommendation for determination to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic and Research) for ratification. The Registrar will advise you of the Committee’s decision.

The Student Academic Misconduct Policy can be accessed from this link on the University’s website http://policies.uws.edu.au/view.current.php?id=00051#s1.

Yours sincerely

[insert name]
Chair, Senate Academic Standards and Integrity Committee