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Academic Integrity in Australia – Understanding and Changing Culture and Practice

Final Report 2015

Macquarie University

The University of Sydney
Australian Catholic University
Rutgers State University of New Jersey, USA

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<http://web.science.mq.edu.au/academic-integrity/index.html>



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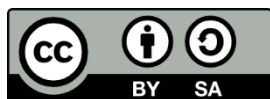


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RUTGERS The State University of New Jersey

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List of acronyms used

6APCEI	6th Asia Pacific Conference on Educational Integrity
ACU	Australian Catholic University
AQHE	Advancing Quality in Higher Education
AI	Academic Integrity
AIM	Academic Integrity Matters (Student Organisation)
AIMA	Academic Integrity Matters Ambassadors (Student Organisation)
ACODE	Australasian Council on Open, Distance and e-Learning
APFEI	Asia Pacific Forum for Educational Integrity
AUSSE	Australasian Survey of Student Engagement
CEDiR	Centre for Educational Development, Innovation & Recognition
EAIP	Exemplary Academic Integrity Project
HEI	Higher Education Institution
IAIMSO	International Academic Integrity Matters Student Organisation
ICAI	International Center for Academic Integrity, USA
MQ	Macquarie University
SONA	Sydney University Psychology Research Participation System
SRITEC 13	Sydney Region IT Education Conventicle 2013
SIBT	Sydney Institute of Business and Technology
OLT	Australian Government Office for Learning and Teaching
USyd	The University of Sydney
VAIL	Virtual Academic Integrity Laboratory

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Executive Summary

Academic Integrity In Australia – understanding and changing culture and practice (2012-2014) is a strategic priority project sponsored by the Australian Government Office for Learning and Teaching (OLT). This project seeks to contribute to improvements in ethos, policy and programs in student academic integrity in the Australian higher education sector. It was led by Macquarie University, with project partners, The University of Sydney, Australian Catholic University and Rutgers University (USA).

A review of the literature into academic integrity management in the Australian context shows a shift away from a 'catch and punish' philosophy, to a more educative approach focused on prevention. Within a climate of renewed industry focus on learning and teaching standards, and quality and consistency in university programs, past research in Australia has looked at academic integrity policies (ACODE, 2005; Bretag et al., 2011; Grigg, 2009; Kaktins, 2013) and student experiences and views regarding academic integrity environments (Bretag et al., 2013; Marsden, 2008; Marsden, Carroll & Neil, 2005). Although proactive approaches to managing academic integrity are certainly a step in the right direction, a key element that remains missing is student input and participation in academic integrity management. Participation in this sense involves more than mere consultation. Sufficient evidential support does not exist to demonstrate significant student consultation in academic integrity policy development and management. Meaningful student participation would involve listening to student experiences regarding what they know about academic integrity, how they feel about and deal with it and then discussing with students the ways by which institutions can facilitate their collaboration and partnership in academic integrity. Such initiatives support a holistic approach to managing academic integrity (Devlin 2002; Freeman, et al., 2007; JISC, 2011; MacDonald & Carroll, 2006; Park, 2003).

As opposed to reducing instances of breaches, a goal of this project was to create novel ways for students to actively engage in the dissemination of academic integrity as a desired value, and discuss related concepts and information among their peers. In doing so, it is hoped that students would have an opportunity to shape the academic integrity culture of their institutions, motivate their peers to feel invested in academic integrity, and be better positioned to take ownership of the institution's academic integrity failures and successes.

The project consisted of four stages:

Stage 1 involved an online academic integrity survey administered to 5538 students at four institutions - Macquarie University, The University of Sydney, Australian Catholic University, and the Sydney Institute of Business and Technology.

The aim of the survey was to identify deeper, culturally based issues regarding how students perceive academic integrity, gaps in how academic integrity information and policies are communicated to students, how students wish to engage with academic integrity information and processes and lastly, to gauge the level of student support for an academic integrity student society.

Stage 2 involved focus groups of 40 students from three Australian universities.

Stage 3 comprised 45 semi-structured interviews at 22 Australian institutions with 45 participants who are involved in providing academic integrity advice to students (37 staff members and 8 student leaders). The aim of this stage was to explore the feasibility of the academic integrity student society concept, and to gather ideas regarding the types of roles and tasks such a society might undertake.

Stage 4, involved creating the first academic integrity student society at an Australian university, informed by the findings from Stages 1-3.

Findings from the study reveal student attitudes regarding the common values associated with academic integrity, the contributing factors to academic integrity breaches and perceptions regarding prevalence and the seriousness of different breach types. In terms of student engagement with academic integrity, the study demonstrates that Australian university students currently receive the bulk of information about academic integrity from their unit outlines (sometimes called study guides or course outlines, depending on the institution). Though there are differences with regards to preferred mode of receiving the information (e.g. from orientation seminars or through in-class discussions), most students were nevertheless satisfied with their unit outlines as a source of information about academic integrity. Students also showed a reliance on receiving this information from their instructors, and would prefer to see their instructors, in the first instance, in the event of any academic integrity issues. With regards to how they wish to learn about academic integrity, students expressed a desire for more engaging ways of learning, indicating a preference for interactive, on-line resources, in-class discussions and information apps.

The staff members participating in the study provided their insights into how students are currently learning about academic integrity and what kind of additional support universities should be providing to educate students and better manage academic integrity. Both staff and student participants provided their views on the viability of academic integrity student societies. This input has informed the creation of the first academic integrity student society in Australia—the *Academic Integrity Matters Ambassadors* (AIMA), which was launched at Macquarie University in February 2014.

Project Deliverables

The project team achieved the six project deliverables:

- A study to identify attitudes and practices of students and staff regarding academic integrity
- Review of the literature and other relevant resources with a particular focus on existing academic integrity management approaches
- Guidelines for how to establish academic integrity societies based on the study results that other HE institutions (HEIs) can fruitfully employ
- Online and publicly accessible resources to support Deliverable 3
- A special track of the 6APCEI Conference to disseminate findings from this and

- other allied OLT projects and
- Student leadership in academic integrity to be established at any of the participating institutions. In light of our findings, the Project Team puts forth the following recommendations

Recommendations

1. HEIs should review their academic integrity management approaches to gauge the extent of student participation in academic integrity
2. HEIs should assess the methods and modes currently used to disseminate AI information to students, with less emphasis on passive forms of receiving information. Alternatives include online interactive activities (e.g. diagnostic quizzes and online modules), in-class discussions and discipline specific workshops or seminars
3. Staff should be made be aware that students can play more meaningful and collaborative role in disseminating and promoting academic integrity
4. Institutions should identify academic integrity champions among students and staff, in driving academic integrity initiatives; and HEIs that seek to implement academic integrity student societies should make use of available resources through collaboration with existing AI student societies.

Details can be found at the project web site:

<http://web.science.mq.edu.au/academic-integrity/index.html>

Project Report

Our goal should not simply be to reduce cheating; rather, our goal should be to find innovative and creative ways to use academic integrity as a building block in our efforts to develop more responsible students and, ultimately, more responsible citizens.

Donald McCabe
*It Takes a Village: Academic Dishonesty and
Educational Opportunity* (2005)

Prelude

The primary, intended outcome of this project was to create a peer-led, bottom-up model for students to engage more positively with academic integrity at their institutions. In this context, the 'building block' analogy provided by the prominent student academic integrity expert, Professor Donald McCabe (also one of our team members) is apt. In line with McCabe's sentiment, the goal of this project was not simply to propose a method of reducing the instances of breaches, but to create novel ways for students to play an active role in the dissemination of academic integrity concepts and information to their peers. In doing so, it is hoped that students will have an opportunity to shape the academic integrity culture of their institutions, to motivate their peers to feel invested in academic integrity, and as such to be better positioned to take ownership of the institution's academic integrity failures and successes.

This report will review the academic integrity environment at universities, with particular focus on the Australian experience, based on current literature investigating breach rates, how breaches are harmful, contributing factors, current academic integrity management approaches, and student perceptions of academic integrity and academic integrity policy in Australian higher education. The aims, outcomes, methodology and theoretical framework of the study are presented, culminating in a discussion of the research findings, project dissemination activities, and the implications for future research that have arisen from this study.

Based on the feedback we received from the first meeting organised by the OLT for all the Academic Integrity project teams and later consultation with the project's Independent Evaluator, the focus of the project shifted to student engagement and an informed bottom-up approach to promoting academic integrity. Accordingly, significant projected funding was committed to collecting and analysing quantitative and qualitative data. Indeed, the actual expense on personnel was 12% more than originally budgeted. This was compensated, by and large, through diligent reduction in the funds spent on project support (-20%) and project activities (-41%).

Academic Integrity Breach Phenomena

Some researchers (e.g. Turner & Beemsterboer, 2003) hold that academic honesty should be an unambiguous, fundamental expectation of all participants in structured education. In the literature, this expectation seemingly co-exists with the notion that academic integrity breaches are unavoidable (Dorff, 2004), and incapable of being completely eradicated. The extent of the problem at Australian institutions is particularly difficult to ascertain due to a lack of longitudinal empirical comparisons. In the absence of local data, we look to the experience of overseas institutions for analogous examples. The earliest landmark study of academic integrity breach behaviour in the US was conducted by Bill Bowers in 1964, involving 5000 students across 99 institutions. The reported academic integrity breach rate among students was 63%. In the US, later reported rates have been as high as 64% (McCabe & Trevino, 1996), 70%, (in a meta-analysis of 46 studies by Whitley, 1998), 90% (Graham et al., 1994) and 92% (Roberts, Anderson & Yanish, 1997). In the UK, Franklyn-Stokes and Newstead (1995) reported a breach rate of 88% for self-reported cheating behaviours. Bjorklund and Wenestam's 1999 study of Scandinavian students reported one of the highest rates in the literature - 91.9% of respondents perceived some manner of cheating behaviour in their fellow students. While limited data exist, the figures are no less concerning in Australia. Sheard et al.'s 2002 study reported rates of between 69% and 85% at two Australian universities. Brimble and Stevenson-Clarke (2005) reported a figure of 72%. In a student self-report study by Marsden, Carroll and Neil (2006), the reported rates were 41% for cheating, 81% for plagiarism and 25% for falsified records or making dishonest excuses. In this present study, when Australian university students were asked if breaches of academic integrity were a serious problem, 55% of respondents selected 'agree' (Nayak et al., 2013). These figures suggest that breach behaviour (or at the very least, perceptions of the phenomena among students) are persistent and pervasive.

Breach Cases in the Media

Sustained media coverage of high profile academic integrity breach cases in the past year have demonstrated that 'cheating cases' are of public interest, particularly when they concern disciplines where codes of ethical conduct are not merely recommended, but are requirements for entry into the profession. Beauchamp (2006) [cited in Smith (2008)] utilised the Freedom of Information Act 1982 to report on 962 students from Victoria who had been cited and in some cases, expelled, for cheating. In August 2013, 160 final-year law students from the University of Tasmania were forced to re-sit their final exam following a breach incident involving an online test (McKay, 2013). In that same month, a news report citing *shameful catalogue of student misconduct* (Kidd & Sandy, 2013:1) among university students in Queensland since 2011 provided examples of the reported breaches including attempts to bribe exam invigilators, assault, bullying, threats, plagiarism and exam cheating.

More recently, 24 medical students from The University of Adelaide were found to have breached the university's academic honesty policy by using prohibited exam information

stored on iPads (ABC News, 2014). The reach of these recent stories (all of which are accessible online) is liable to increase with the widespread use of new online websites and social media, culminating in greater awareness of the phenomena and concerns regarding institutional and program reputation from students, the public and employers. These concerns may be justified, considering the association between breach behaviours in undergraduate study and self-reported dishonesty in the workplace (Sims, 1993).

HE Sector Spotlight on Academic Integrity

Occurring alongside heightened media scrutiny is simply a focus on academic integrity in general, at both the industry and institutional level. Currently, more work is being done in Australian higher education to examine not just the extent of the phenomena, but the policies, rhetoric and management strategies at universities that aim to address it.

Over the past four years, the Australian Government Office for Learning and Teaching has prioritised research into academic integrity by funding three other national projects¹ which tackle different aspects of academic integrity management at Australian universities. It is within this climate of change and a focus on the quality of learning and teaching that academic integrity has come under the spotlight.

Audits of academic integrity policies at universities constitute a logical approach to gauging the breadth and detail of policies. Findings from such studies have provided useful insights. In 2004, a survey of the academic integrity policies of 51 institutions in Australia and New Zealand was undertaken by the Australian Council on Open, Distance and E-Learning (ACODE, 2005), which reported on inconsistencies in policy and treatment of academic integrity across the sector. In 2009, Grigg's analysis of academic integrity policies with a focus on the linguistic characteristics of the policies, reported on the negative appraisal and judgement-laden terminology. A similar approach and findings were reported by Kaktins (2013) in her overview of plagiarism policies at Australian universities, with emphasis on definitions, case registers and tone of discourse. The largest student academic integrity study was recently undertaken by Bretag et al. (2013), involving a survey of 15,304 students.

The study revealed that students were reasonably confident in their understanding of academic integrity (AI), but were less satisfied with the level of support they were given in relation to engaging with AI information and rules. Earlier, Bretag et al. (2011) provided a comprehensive analysis of academic integrity policies at the 39 Australian universities with the overall aim of improving alignment between policy, rhetoric and implementation. The study revealed that most academic integrity management systems utilised a combination of punitive and educative approaches, but also underscored a need for universities to create more creative and appropriate methods to involve students in

¹ The three concurrent OLT AI Priority Projects 2010-2014:- Academic integrity standards: aligning policy and practice in Australian universities <<http://www.olt.gov.au/project-academic-integrity-standards-aligning-policy-and-practice---australian---universities---2010>>; Working from the centre: supporting unit/course co-ordinators to implement academic integrity policies, resources and scholarship <<http://www.olt.gov.au/project-working-centre-supporting-unitcourse-co-ordinators-implement-academic-integrity-policies-res>> and Plagiarism and related issues in assessments not involving text <<http://www.olt.gov.au/project---plagiarism-and-related-issues-assessments-not-involving-text-2012>>

building a culture of integrity.

Given the current focus and recommendations for a more holistic and collaborative approach to managing academic integrity, it is timely to consider the potentially efficient methods that not only attempt to identify, penalise and educate students, but also involve them in creating positive academic integrity environments where students can make meaningful contributions.

Project Rationale and Aims

This project sought to add to the body of knowledge on approaches to academic integrity management by focusing on a concept that has not been studied before in the Australian context—*peer-driven student participation and engagement in academic integrity*. The initial survey undertaken by the project team, which reported on the ways Australian university students preferred to engage with academic integrity, highlighted the top-down approach typically used at Australian institutions and the lack of student-led ethos into academic integrity. From the outset, this project adopted a different approach — “*By emphasizing a developmental approach to AI, that actively involves the participation of the student body, it is likely to foster a more ethical student population and develop an ethos of academic honesty across the university*” Nayak et al. (2013:45-46).

Accordingly, there were two main aims of the project:

- To uncover student values, perceptions and experiences of the academic integrity environment at their enrolled institutions, so that informed, peer led approaches to engaging students in academic integrity could be devised; and
- To nurture student leadership in academic integrity through the formation of a grassroots level student society tasked with promoting and championing academic integrity (within an institution), and to create resources from this endeavour that are generalizable across the sector.

Research Questions

Accordingly there were five research questions:

1. What are students' views regarding academic integrity at their enrolled institution?
2. How are students currently receiving information about academic integrity and how do they prefer to receive this information?
3. What do students and staff think about a voluntary student society that promotes academic integrity?
4. What kind of roles and activities do they envision for this proposed society?
5. How can student academic integrity societies be established and nurtured?

Theoretical Framework

The project utilised the *Theory of Change* as the underlying theoretical framework to guide the four project stages. Emerging in the 1990s, the Theory of Change was the result of the Aspen Institute Roundtable on Community Change, culminating in the work of Fulbright-Anderson (1995) and other notable Aspen Institute members. From the 1990s, Theory of Change has been used in different contexts, but most notably to facilitate community change programs (Connell & Kubisch, 1998) and, rather fittingly for the purposes of this study, to evaluate educational programs (Hart et al., 2009).

Theory of Change provided the foundation for the project methodology, serving as a roadmap or pathway to achieving the project's long term goals. This is achieved by first articulating the intended short term and long term outcomes, then identifying the necessary preconditions, drivers and resources to achieve these outcomes. Preconditions and assumptions are made explicit, and rationales are provided for each process activity. More than just a common-sense framework for evaluation and planning, Theory of Change serves as a transparent and iterative process to track the process and impact of program activities, so that results can be continually evaluated against the intended outcomes (Weiss, 1995).

Project Methodology

We began with a review of the literature on academic integrity in higher education with specific focus on the existing definitions of academic integrity, the harm resulting from (academic integrity) breaches, institutional responses to such breaches and the gap in current academic integrity management approaches that this study seeks to fill. This review is provided in Appendix A. Following the literature review, the project was carried out in a methodologically sound fashion according to the Theory of Change process described in detail in Appendix B, and consisted of four stages, each stage designed to inform the next.

The four stages in question are:

Stage 1: Academic Integrity student survey

Stage 2: Student focus groups

Stage 3: Interviews with staff and students in AI support roles

Stage 4: Creation of an Academic Integrity Student Society

The survey in Stage 1 aimed to ascertain student attitudes and perceptions regarding academic integrity at the four participating institutions, and student opinions regarding academic integrity student societies. This was the first step in testing the viability of a possible student society. Key concepts identified by respondents in the Stage 1 survey were then used to inform the student focus group questions and discussion topics in Stage 2. In focus groups, students were asked about their understanding, experiences and engagement preferences relating to academic integrity and their views regarding the viability and potential role of an academic integrity student society at their institution.

Findings from Stages 1 and 2 in turn were employed in designing the interview questions used in Stage 3. This stage involved structured interviews with participants who occupied academic integrity support and referral roles at Australian universities. Interviewees were asked about the academic integrity cultures at their institutions, how students engaged with academic integrity, and their views regarding student-led academic integrity. Pertinent concepts, suggestions and ideas from all three initial stages were then used in the brainstorming activity and student society formation that comprised Stage 4. Figure 1 shows the relationship between the four project stages.

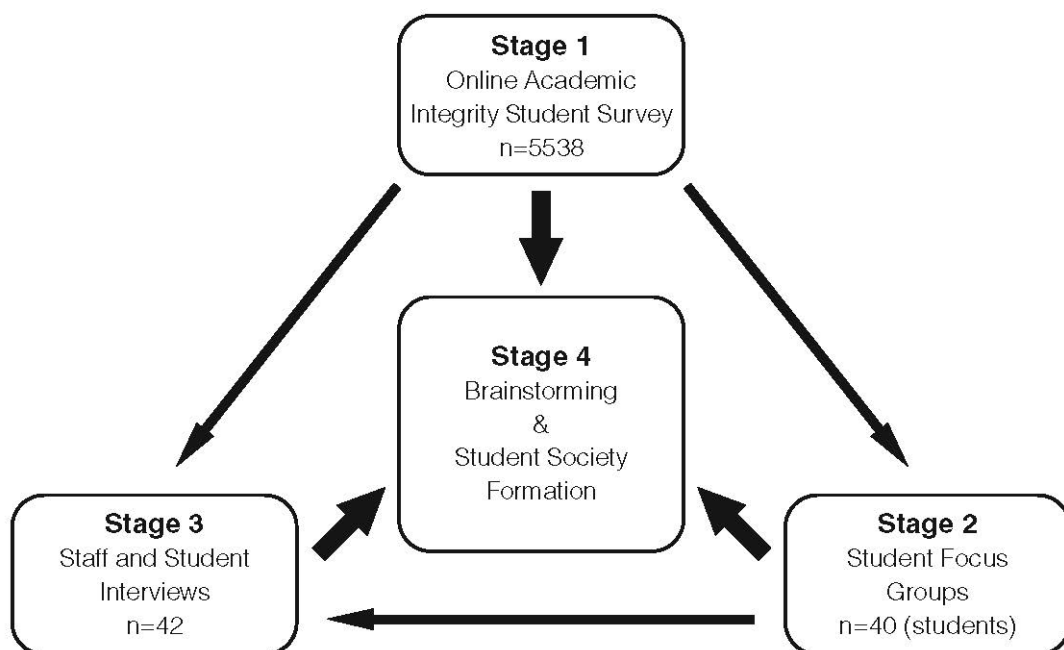


Figure 1: Four Stages of the Project

Project Outputs/Deliverables

The major project outputs are listed below, and detailed in the Appendices.

1. A broad study to identify attitudes and practices of students and staff regarding academic integrity seeking to identify cultural issues, including organisational, discipline---specific, regional and ethnicity---based differences and needs. The study included qualitative data collection via focus groups and interviews at the participating organisation, allowing deep exploration of academic integrity-related issues.
2. Review of the literature and other relevant resources with a particular focus existing academic-integrity management approaches.
3. Guidelines for how to establish an academic integrity society that other Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) can utilise.
4. Online and publicly accessible resources to support Outputs 2 and 3.
5. Two information videos on academic integrity student societies.
6. An Information Booklet used at MQ to recruit students to join the society.
7. A website which includes outputs 4, 5 and 6, summarised research findings and resources such as a downloadable 'Quick Start' brochure on how to set up an academic integrity student society.²
8. A special track of the Sixth Asia Pacific Conference on Educational Integrity (6APCEI) was devoted to academic integrity and was used to disseminate project findings
9. A generalisable model for Theory of Change model depicting the stages and components involved in setting up the society for use in other institutions. Details of this model and our approach are provided in Appendix B.

Perhaps the most significant output from the project is the *Academic Integrity Matters Ambassadors* student society (AIMA), formed at MQ at the end of February 2014. The society currently consists of 29 student Ambassadors, including an Executive Committee of 13 core Ambassadors. This student society is also the first international branch of the International Academic Integrity Student Organisation, based at the University of California, San Diego (UCSD).

² <http://web.science.mq.edu.au/academic---integrity/index.html>

Dissemination

In terms of dissemination, the Project Team's primary aim was to spread awareness and *test the concept* of what we have identified to be the missing academic integrity management approach—student participation. To this end, project team members presented the academic integrity student society concept at conferences and seminars, supported with data from the student survey and focus groups. In conducting interviews with staff and students who occupy academic integrity support roles in Stage 3, the novel concept of student participation in academic integrity promotion was discussed with representatives from 22 institutions around Australia, generating curiosity, scepticism, constructive feedback and in each case, keen interest in the project outcomes and student society trial at MQ. A major output and dissemination vehicle for the Project was the 6APCEI held at MQ in October 2013. The conference was attended by 99 delegates from Australia and overseas and featured a Special Track devoted to OLT-funded Academic Integrity Projects. In addition to the Special Track and project-based presentations by the team members, the Conference Proceedings also consisted of 27 submissions on academic integrity. Lastly, there is also a proposed volume to be published by Springer in 2015 on Academic Integrity (with a section devoted entirely to student participation approaches). More details regarding the project dissemination activities are provided in Appendix F.

Findings, Discussion and Implications

We present the findings in accordance with the five research questions outlined above, gathered through the first three stages of the project. A more detailed account of our research findings can be found in Appendices C and D. The aim of the research was to develop a better and more nuanced understanding of institutional academic integrity cultures and students' expectations, engagement experiences and roles therein. This included finding out what students felt about academic integrity in terms of values, responsibility, awareness of common breach types, contributing factors, prevalence of breach phenomena, preferred sources of academic integrity information and support, and what they thought about the concept of a student society that promoted academic integrity at their university.

Although the Stage 1 survey (n=5538) captured responses of students from a variety of background and disciplines, the majority of the respondents were female, local, studying internally and full-time in mainly undergraduate programs. They were mostly aged between 18 and 25 and spoke English at home. One of the major activities undertaken by students when they were *not* studying, was paid employment. In terms of their ethnic background most respondents indicated that they were from Australasian backgrounds.

In the Stage 2 focus groups (n=40), most participants were also female, local, studying internally and were full-time students. Focus group participants tended to be older,

however, with most aged 26 years and over and as a consequence, they had spent more time in higher education. Thus, views obtained from focus groups were more likely to reflect those of more academically 'seasoned' students.

Stage 3 participants (n=45) consisted of 37 university (or student guild, association/union) staff members, and eight students. All staff interviewees occupied formal or informal academic integrity support, referral or advice roles. Student interviewees occupied student leadership and representation roles. Both groups were in a unique position to provide insight into academic integrity issues and student preferences regarding engagement with academic integrity. Among the staff interviewees, role titles and remits varied between institutions, but there was one common element relating to most of the staff roles—most staff members worked in student support or student advising positions that encompassed academic integrity issues. Only one university out of 22 had designated Academic Integrity Officers (who were also members of teaching staff). At all other institutions, staff members who dealt with academic integrity often also dealt with a variety of other academic appeals and student grievance casework.

Research Question 1:

What are students' views regarding academic integrity at their enrolled institution?

In the survey, students ranked four of the five provided International Center for Academic Integrity (ICAI) fundamental values of academic integrity highly, but felt it was mainly about honesty (though, the other values of fairness, respect and trust followed closely behind, in that order). In the focus groups, students were not given specific values to consider, but were instead asked what academic integrity meant to them and what values were attached to their understanding of academic integrity. As a result, focus group participants were more likely to provide answers in terms of actions and behaviours that corresponded with the fundamental values of academic integrity. Overall, focus group participants demonstrated sound conception of academic integrity values. Reflecting the survey findings, honesty/transparency was most frequently discussed, followed by respecting the intellectual property of others, doing things the 'right' way were the commonly mentioned values and behaviour associated with academic integrity. For Stage 3 interviewees, similar values and associated behaviours were discussed. In fact, interviewees mentioned four of the five ICAI fundamental values—honesty, fairness, respect and trust. Honesty was once again stood out, mentioned by the majority of interview participants (31 out of 45).

The fifth fundamental value of *responsibility* was explored in a separate sub-question in the survey, where students were asked whom they thought was responsible for academic integrity at their institution. The vast majority of survey and focus group participants agreed that academic integrity was the shared responsibility of the university community, though survey respondents also perceived themselves as being more responsible for

academic integrity than academic or administration staff. Given the level of perceived responsibility of students, it is curious then that students are not afforded opportunities to shape and drive academic integrity at Australian universities.

The notable difference in findings relating to the responsibility sub-question in the survey was for SIBT students. Almost twice the number of SIBT students agreed that academic staff were responsible for academic integrity, compared to the average level of agreement across the four cohorts. We suspect this is due to SIBT being a much smaller institution. SIBT students are able to maintain a greater level of personal, frequent contact with their teachers and thus may be more likely to view them as authority figures and caretakers of the institution's academic integrity. Another contributing factor to this might be that compared to other institutions the proportion of international students was substantially higher at SIBT. These purported conclusions are supported by other survey findings where SIBT students preferred to receive academic integrity information from their teacher, above all other sources. It would be prudent for implementers to consider if this preference may indicate that student--driven academic integrity initiatives may have difficulty flourishing in smaller Australian academic institutions where students have similar expectations of their instructors.

In the survey, there was a very high level of agreement regarding academic integrity additionally being about following rules and policies and about penalties for dishonesty. This finding implies that the management of student academic integrity at Australian universities is perceived as a bureaucratic feature rather than an effort to inculcate desired values among students.

Findings from the survey indicate that students consider academic integrity to be the responsibility of the entire university community. This finding suggests that universities need to provide opportunities for students to play a positive role in shaping academic integrity through the promulgation of academic integrity culture among students, rather than by merely avoiding committing breaches.

When asked what roles different university staff and departments could play in teaching students about academic integrity, the focus group participants most frequently mentioned tutors and lecturers (more so than professional staff from faculties, schools, departments, the library and learning support). They saw their teachers as primary disseminators and sources of academic integrity information, a view that was also echoed in the Stage 3 interviews with university staff members.

In terms of student perceptions and awareness of perceived prevalence of breaches, survey findings indicated that students considered breaches to be a significant issue at their university (55% of students in the survey agreed that it was a serious problem). While most students felt that there were no special circumstances where it was acceptable to behave dishonestly, 26.4% (or 1455 students) felt that there were circumstances where academic dishonesty is acceptable. It is interesting to ponder what these special circumstances might be and if they relate to any of the survey respondents' cited reasons for breaches. For students, the pressures directly and indirectly relating to university were the main reasons why students committed breaches. These include the pressure to succeed, financial pressure and other competing priorities. Conversely, students were not likely to perceive that institutional factors such as ineffective academic integrity policy or poor dissemination of academic integrity information were major contributing factors. Rather, the reasons students indicated as being major contributing factors were internal and personal to them.

Overall, demographic variables of students had little effect in terms of what students felt were the main contributing factors for academic integrity breaches. The only difference was found in the factors that students felt were *least likely* to contribute to breaches. Local students at USyd, ACU and SIBT indicated that ineffective academic integrity policy was the least likely to cause breach behaviour, while for international students, it was opportunities to act dishonestly that was the least likely reason. From the findings, it is clear that students perceive breaches to be the end result of how students react to stress. These findings replicate previous work in Australia and overseas which identified stressful life events and the influence of peers (Marsden, 2008; McCabe & Trevino 1993; 1997; Rettinger & Kramer, 2009) as the chief reasons why students commit breaches.

While reducing the combined impact of the pressures faced by students is difficult, institutions may wish to focus on areas where academic integrity breaches are likely to manifest due to stress from time management, balancing work and study (see Song-Turner, 2008) and managing pressure (e.g. rethinking assignment tasks, frequency and weighting [see Devlin, 2002; 2003]. Counselling in relation to time and stress management would be beneficial. This is further supported by the focus group participants who indicated a strong preference for some manner of counselling support in addition to seeking assistance from their teachers, in the event of a breach issue.

Focus group students were also cognisant of the types of harm that stem from breaches of academic integrity. For them, foremost was the damage to reputation— for the institution, the program and for students. Other areas of harm include students not learning properly and consequently, are more likely to be incompetent in the workplace, losing trust, harming and being unfair to others.

Findings with regards to students' understanding and awareness of the various breach types, meanwhile, indicated that more work could be done in this area to provide examples of less common breach types and how they can occur. Not surprisingly, the less common (and arguably less well---defined) types---collusion, falsification and sabotage---were deemed to be less serious in terms of their median ranking when compared to cheating and plagiarism. In the focus groups, students felt that they were aware of most of the six breach types and in general, were not surprised by any of them. They were less confident in their knowledge and understanding of sabotage and collusion.

When focus group participants were asked about their personal experiences with breaches, the most common examples provided concerned cheating and plagiarism, followed by collusion and poor referencing (the latter referring to unintentional plagiarism). There was only one mentioned experience involving indirect sabotage and another case relating to theft. Another finding from the focus group discussion related to terminology used to describe breaches in general. Plagiarism was perceived as the most common breach type, and this term seemed to be used interchangeably with 'cheating', 'academic dishonesty' and 'academic misconduct'. Through the course of the discussion, students acknowledged that there were different forms of academic integrity breaches, of which 'plagiarism' is just one type. In light of this finding, it would be beneficial to include examples of breach types, *specific* to particular disciplines, within the sources that students most frequently refer to for academic integrity information, typically the unit or course outline or guide.

Research Question 2:

How are students currently receiving information about academic integrity and how do they prefer to receive this information?

Focus group participants indicated that academic integrity values existed in the university community through common sense. Additionally, it is communicated through academic integrity policies, by teaching staff, unit outlines and to some extent, via word of mouth from other students. These responses indicate that students feel that academic integrity is as much about inherent knowledge and values, as it is about institutional rules and procedures.

Interview participants stated that academic integrity values were mostly communicated through policies, teaching staff, through unit outlines, course materials, and online (placing the dissemination of academic integrity as being very much a university and university staff responsibility). More than half of the focus group responses indicated that the information was not provided effectively or in a consistent manner and that information provided mostly in unit outlines was insufficient.

This assessment is somewhat at odds with students' perception of how well academic integrity information is communicated to them. The survey of 15,304 Australian

university students by Bretag et al. (2013) found that most of the students indicated sound awareness of academic integrity and academic integrity policies, and were satisfied (though at a slightly lower level) with the information and support provided to them. Bretag et al. (2013) suggest (and concur with previous research by Gullifer and Tyson [2010]) that students may not be effectively using the information and resources available to them. Bretag et al. (2013:16) state: *“Clearly it is not enough to provide information to students; universities need to ensure that they have a range of hands-on, engaging activities that are repeated and reconfigured in a range of media and forums throughout the student’s programme of study.”*

This view is reflected in this present study’s survey findings whereby students said they wanted more engaging and interactive resources. The students surveyed in this study were mostly satisfied with the way academic integrity information was disseminated to them. The most commonly mentioned dissemination source that all student groups (largely regardless of demography) was course unit outlines, followed by during lectures and during orientation. Students were generally satisfied with these sources, although there was some variation with regards to preferences.

Focus group students at ACU, USyd and SIBT who were at the start of their academic careers preferred a more personal approach to learning about academic integrity. Their preferred source was tutorials. At MQ, the more senior students (having completed two years or more) preferred lectures. The vast majority of interviewees (32 out of 45) felt that unit outlines and teachers were not sufficient sources of academic integrity information on their own, however seven interviewees felt that multiple sources of academic integrity information were a good way of reaching more students. Most interviewees mentioned other sources of information that were staff or institution-driven (e.g. incorporating academic integrity into assessment tasks, staff modelling good behaviour for students). Only four interviewees mentioned peer-group or student mentors as a possible academic integrity resource. The implication of these findings might be that institutions simply do not think of students in terms of assisting the dissemination and promotion of academic integrity. Students are viewed as a target or stakeholder group, but not as active participants in proactive academic integrity management. To some extent, survey and focus group findings suggest that students also view themselves in this light, but their strong perception of academic integrity as a shared community value and a shared community responsibility also suggests that they may be in a position to take on a more involved role in academic integrity processes.

In terms of how students want to learn about academic integrity, findings from the survey indicated that students were more likely to be interested in interactive online resources above other modes and methods. Other preferred methods include information apps, in-class exercises and orientation seminars. Combining Stage 1, 2 and 3 findings regarding where students currently receive (and prefer to receive) their academic integrity information, the argument could be made that unit outlines should comprise a central,

discipline and course-specific source of academic integrity information, complimented by other dissemination modes that interest students. Students suggested discussing academic integrity issues during lessons (with examples), attending workshops and seminars during orientation, and learning about it via interactive online tools such as modules, quizzes and apps.

The data also suggest another prudent course of action would be for institutions to test if students' perceived high level of confidence and awareness of academic integrity rules is accurate to begin with. Some institutions have implemented online academic integrity modules and online tutorials where students can take quizzes to test their knowledge regarding academic integrity, but these are not always compulsory. The MQ Learning Skills team recently trialed and implemented a voluntary online academic integrity module³ that tests students' knowledge of academic integrity and then provides feedback to the students. Where such systems are available, collecting data regarding what areas students are least likely to know about (e.g. fabrication, collusion and sabotage) could be used to create more targeted approaches to dissemination of academic integrity information.

Focus group participants were also asked to comment on groups of students within the university community whom they thought could benefit from extra assistance in learning about academic integrity. Bretag et al. (2013) suggest that institutions should devise means of identifying at-risk student groups (e.g. international students, postgraduate research students) who may not be sufficiently aware of academic integrity rules. There were three main groups mentioned in the focus group responses—students for whom English is a second language (ESL), high-school leavers and international students. During focus group discussions, participants felt that the above-mentioned students were more likely to face difficulties in familiarising themselves with academic integrity rules and information. For ESL and international students, these difficulties were attributed to students coming from different pedagogical backgrounds and where academic integrity rules may be different to what is expected of students at Australian universities. For high school leavers, the concept of academic integrity in higher education may be regarded by high school leavers as assumed knowledge rather than actual knowledge, and like ESL and international students, there may be a great deal of information to acquire, understand and apply in a very short duration. Focus group participants suggested that specific interventions could be created to assist these perceived 'at-risk' groups.

In terms of who students would go to, to seek assistance and advice relating to academic integrity issues, focus group participants overwhelmingly said they would rely on university staff—namely lecturers or tutors, student support staff, unit convenors, library

³ The MQ Online Academic Integrity Module is available in both staff and student versions. See here

www.students.mq.edu.au/support/learning_skills/academic_integrity_module_for_students/

staff, counsellors and heads of departments. Examples of the type of assistance students wanted from university staff include providing reminders regarding academic integrity expectations, being available for consultation, providing workshops and generally reinforcing good academic practice and giving academic integrity a more visible presence on campus.

Research Question 3:

What do students and staff think about a voluntary student society that promotes academic integrity?

Survey participants were asked if they were willing to participate in an academic integrity student society. This question was intended to directly assess the viability of the student society concept. A total of 1488 students (27%) indicated that they were interested, constituting a sizeable pool from which to recruit potential members. Among the four institutions, only a greater proportion of SIBT students (54.4%) indicated that they were interested in student societies as a method of learning about academic integrity, compared to SIBT students who were not interested (45.6%). This level of endorsement is somewhat surprising given SIBT's students previously stated preference for learning about academic integrity via their teachers. It is perhaps indicative of SIBT students' willingness to engage with academic integrity resources from multiple sources.

Interestingly, and perhaps related to the above finding from SIBT (where more than half the students are international), 55.6% of all international students at ACU, USyd and SIBT⁴ stated they were interested in student societies as a method of learning about academic integrity, compared to only 25.4% of local students. Relevant to this finding, students from non---Australasian backgrounds and students from non---English speaking backgrounds were also more likely to show interest in learning about academic integrity from student societies. The study by Bretag et al. (2013) highlighted that international students had a reduced awareness of academic integrity rules and as a likely result, were not as confident in their ability to avoid committing breaches as compared to local students. This perceived lack of confidence or familiarity with academic integrity rules and procedures may account for why international students in the present study were more likely to be interested in participating in an academic integrity student society, as this participation would mean more opportunities for engagement with the subject matter.

Other demographic variables that had an impact on student society interest included age, mode of study and type of postgraduate study. At MQ, 15% of internal students were willing to participate in an academic integrity society, compared to 10% of external students. Additionally at MQ, 17% of postgraduate coursework students were willing to participate, compared to 10% of postgraduate research students. At ACU, older students (over 40 years) were more likely to show an interest in student societies than their

⁴ MQ students were not asked about their local/international student status.

younger counterparts. For institutions seeking to implement student societies, these findings provide further food for thought regarding the types of activities that student societies can undertake, that are perceived to be useful to student cohorts that currently express *less* interest in the concept.

Among focus group participants, most were supportive of the idea, but felt that there were obstacles such as student apathy and students being too time poor to participate in society activities. However, it should be noted that the reference to being time poor, in this instance, relates to perceived student society members' time commitment, rather than time commitments from students who may interact with and benefit from the society.

Among the interviewees, eight out of 45 felt that it would be better for students to receive academic integrity information from university staff or other authority figures, as students would take the information more seriously. A similar number felt that this information should be reinforced through multiple sources. More than half of the interviews perceived that students did value input from their peers and were influenced by their peers. Given this, interviewees were ultimately supportive of the idea of an academic integrity student society in theory (24 interviewees indicated that it was a good idea), but had concerns and comments regarding the practical aspects of creating and maintaining the society. Chief among these concerns was a perceived lack of interest from students, confidentiality issues and the heavy resources commitment required of implementers. Many interviewees felt that the student society would require ongoing supervision and support from the institution to keep functioning.

In order to provide focus group and interview participants with an analogue of a student-driven academic integrity management system, examples of academic honour code policies used at US institutions were presented for discussion.

The code policies are as follows:

- All members of the university community agree to a code of ethical conduct.
- May involve contracts, pledges or oaths signed by students who promise to commit to ethical personal and academic conduct.
- The university website will contain a description of the honour code policy and procedures.
- The responsibility for maintaining academic integrity can lie mainly with the students, or with students and academics.
- Students are required to inform the university if they witness another student committing a breach of academic integrity.
- Students may be granted unsupervised exams.
- University disciplinary committees may consist entirely of student members, or a mix of students and academics.

- Penalties for proven cases of honour code breaches are typically harsh.

The students in the focus groups were slightly less supportive of the honour code concept than they were about an Australian university academic integrity student society. While they perceived some positive elements and some similarities to academic integrity policies already in use at Australian universities, the following concerns were expressed: Honour code systems were deemed to be more suitable to US institution cultures and may not work at Australian universities (a view also expressed by UK students who answered a similar question in Yakovchuk, Badge & Scott, 2011); students felt that unsupervised exams were an unrealistic situation to expect at Australian universities; and that Australian students would be particularly unwilling to reveal breaches committed by their peers (i.e., an aversion to ‘dobbing’). Other general comments about honour code systems applied in the Australian higher education context included that it would be a good idea to emphasise the punitive aspects of the system (as a deterrent), and that the honour code should require staff to be signatories as well.

Among the interviewees, when presented with the same example list of honour code policies, participant opinions were more split. Seventeen interviewees thought it would be a good idea, while twelve said it was a bad idea. However, over the course of the interviews, the feedback and comments from interviewees pointed to a sceptical response overall. It seemed that both focus group and interview participants were more critical regarding this ready-made model for student engagement with academic integrity. The reasons for this were similar to those expressed by focus group participants— university culture incompatibility, student apathy, aversion to naming other students implicated in breach activity. An additional common concern among the interview participants was that for codes to work, they would need to be highly visible, endorsed by the university executive and supported by the university community. In essence, many interviewees expressed the view that all these conditions would be difficult to satisfy at Australian campuses.

Research Question 4:

What kind of roles and activities do students and staff envision for this proposed society?

A study conducted by Badge et al., (2011) [cited in Little (2011)] reported that students responded well to proactive approaches to manage plagiarism. Students were provided with referencing examples, reminders, examples of plagiarism types, and were encouraged to take responsibility for their work and seek assistance if they needed to. The focus of the interventions in the study were on emphasising positive aspects of scholarship and academic integrity, rather than on dealing with plagiarism incidences punitively.

Overall, the responses and feedback provided from the present study tended to also emphasise proactive, preventative strategies, particularly in the area of student support in academic work. Students in the survey were provided with a list of seven activities that an academic integrity student society might run. The most popular response categories were providing advice and counselling to students regarding academic integrity matters, providing feedback and suggestions to university staff/administration and running information booths on academic integrity during Orientation Week. Students preferred that the society serve as a source of information, advice and referral, and as a communication conduit between students and the university. Suggestions from the focus groups tended to include suggestions for improving student engagement with academic integrity in general, but in terms of what a student society might provide, the participants mentioned counselling most frequently.

Other suggestions included providing someone to talk to about academic integrity issues, holding discussions about consequences, providing examples of breaches and placing adverts around campus. Heightened visibility and presence of academic integrity—both the positives and the negatives—was a suggestion by focus group and interview participants. Improving visibility and providing reminders can be helpful in deterring, as demonstrated in the study by Kirkvliet and Sigmund (1999).

One of the most frequent suggestions raised by interview participants was to embed the society or carry out specific tasks that the society would have otherwise undertaken on its own, in an *existing* student support initiative (such as within learning skills programs or student mentor groups). The rationale for this suggestion was that it would counter the risk of a standalone society failing to thrive due to lack of student interest, and the perceived heavy time and resource commitment required to make the society a success. The challenge of adopting such a suggestion would be to ensure that the initiative is still student-driven whilst being embedded in programs that are otherwise supervised and organised by university staff. The benefits of adopting this suggestion, meanwhile, seem to align with a common concern expressed by the interviewees—that Australian university students would need staff assistance to make the society concept work and that students generally want to engage with academic integrity through teaching staff.

Research Question 5:

How can student academic integrity societies be established and nurtured?

Based on the findings from this study, the answer to this question is divided into two general sections — *Stakeholder Identification and Consultation*, and *Identifying and Maximising Resources*. A more detailed model for the setting up of a student society is contained in Appendix B, via the project team's *Generalisable Theory of Change Framework*.

Stakeholder Identification and Consultation

The outcomes of the present study have shown that consultation with academic integrity stakeholders is the first step in determining whether or not the student society model is viable at a given institution. Just as important, consultation with stakeholders also helps to operationalise and market the concept itself. The project team undertook extensive consultation with stakeholders in the form of a survey at four institutions, focus groups at three institutions and interviews at 22 institutions. Future, similar initiatives at other institutions need not be so extensive. Smaller-scale stakeholder consultation is a more realistic and achievable undertaking for institutions that seek to implement academic integrity student societies of their own.

Consultation with stakeholders regarding the student society model served to place a spotlight on the academic integrity culture at an institution. Individuals and groups who are surveyed or asked to provide feedback and suggestions are essentially called upon to reflect on academic integrity issues, particularly how students engage with academic integrity, the extent of breaches, the harm of breaches, and on how well current academic integrity management systems are functioning. Stakeholders may feel that there is a role for a student-driven academic integrity initiative. As is presented in the project's *Generalisable Theory of Change Framework*, a perceived need among stakeholder groups for this initiative can become a powerful Driver for Change.

In investigating the viability of the concept with students, the project team found that deeper understanding of the positive value of academic integrity can be garnered by discussing whom exactly is responsible for academic integrity and who are the direct and indirect stakeholders of an institution's academic integrity. A cursory look at the only available analogue for student-driven academic integrity—honour codes used at US institutions—points to the strong concept of community that permeates honour code policies and artefacts. For students to play a more meaningful role in upholding academic integrity, it would be beneficial for them to understand how academic integrity affects everyone from students, the university, to employers, industry and wider society.

The findings from the study would seem to show that although students do feel that academic integrity is the responsibility of the entire university community, when asked about which groups make up the university community, students readily identified two main groups—staff and students—and were less likely to consider other indirect stakeholders of academic integrity in the community such as employers, industry, research sector and members of the public. All members of the community have obligations and responsibilities, but in turn reap the potential benefits. With a sense of investment in academic integrity, students may then be inclined to take more ownership of it, and institutions may be more inclined to facilitate this.

To reiterate the survey findings, students agreed that academic integrity was about rules, policies and penalties almost as much as they agreed that it was about values such as honesty, fairness and respect. Assisting students to see it as having *positive effects* would greatly promote students' investment and interest in academic integrity. Institutions would be advised to stress the positive elements alongside the punitive and the procedural elements in the way they educate their students about academic integrity.

Identifying and Maximising Resources

Once it is determined that an academic integrity student society is to be established at an institution, the next step is to assess the available resources (or Enabling Factors) to bring the plan to fruition. As is outlined in the project's *Generalisable Theory of Change Framework*, these Enabling Factors may be human, financial, logistical, inter and intra-institutional resources. The availability of these resources will obviously vary from institution to institution (with funding likely to be the biggest challenge), but there are two key resources that will likely be easier to source—academic integrity champions, and intra and inter-institutional resources. The experience of the project team in setting up AIMA at MQ has supported Gallant and Drinan's (2008) assertion that 'academic integrity champions' or 'allies' are important drivers and caretakers for change in academic integrity interventions.

One of the main discussion points raised by interviewees in Stage 3 concerned inherent problems regarding the creation and long--term maintenance of the student society. Interviewees felt that due to a perceived lack of interest, the realities of the subject matter being 'dry' and students being time poor in general, some manner of facilitation or coordination by a staff member would be essential to keep the student society on track. Though AIMA at MQ is still in its infancy, the society has benefited greatly from the involvement of an Academic Integrity Champion (in this instance, the Project Manager), particularly since AIMA is a new type of society at Australian universities and there are no local models to refer to. Assistance rendered to the society has been in the form of coordination and administration. The goal of this assistance is that it sets in place structures (e.g. a society executive and website) and protocols (e.g. a Constitution) that society members can rely on and refer to in the long--term, thus minimising the need for frequent staff assistance.

Our view is that an Academic Integrity Champion or ally is the ideal person to nurture the student society. This individual (or team) can be a member/s of staff or postgraduate students who have an interest and passion for academic integrity. Implementers of a student society initiative would benefit from some creative thinking in sourcing members of the university community who might like to take on this role. It would also be helpful to advertise the benefits of participating in the initiative—for both staff and students who are interested in the role. Lastly, the commitment may be finite, with Academic Integrity Champions committing to a fixed duration of society supervision before another

individual takes their place. Other more readily acquirable resources can be derived from existing academic integrity student societies.

In essence, societies that come after AIMA at MQ need not reinvent the wheel. They may wish to become additional branches of the AIM family, undertaking similar roles, activities and sharing resources and strategies. Or they may wish to glean relevant aspects AIMA at MQ's operations and create new versions of student-led academic integrity. The benefit of the former approach cannot be understated, as AIM branches will automatically belong to an established community, making evaluation of student society activities and impacts more robust and generalisable.

Evaluation

Associate Professor Margaret Wallace from the University of Wollongong evaluated this project as an independent evaluator. While commending many aspects of the project, such as the agility with which the project adapted new methods of data collection in order not to overlap with data collected elsewhere, the evaluator also provided suggestions on how this project could be (have been) improved. We provide the evaluator's report as Appendix G. Here we briefly touch upon a few substantive suggestions made by the evaluator.

1. The evaluator comments: ... *a project of this type with students as likely key stakeholders may have benefited from even more creative and imaginative forms of dissemination beyond the web site, videos and guidelines.* She then provides an explanation for it: *these [things] take time and talent to develop.* We would like to also add that our focus was more on first understanding the landscape of academic integrity from a student-centric perspective before developing resources based on what may turn out to be faulty assumptions.
2. While recognizing the rich store of qualitative data the project has acquired through the focus group meetings and semi---structured interviews, the evaluator also hints at the difficulties of communicating that information to the outside world in an accessible manner: *Effectively communicating findings from interview and focus group data can be challenging.* That is very true. The project team plans to look at the data more closely in the near future, and communicate interesting and broad conclusions they can draw through conferences, publications and other relevant media.
3. The evaluator also mentions that some resources at the project website are available only to the project members, and suggests that it would be better to make the site more visible (via links from other sites) and more accessible. We are in the process of deciding which of currently restricted access resources can be made available to the general public without compromising the team's interest in publishing results. The evaluator suggests that it would have been useful if remote participation was made available at the 6APCEI where a special track was devoted to the dissemination of results from different OLT projects including ours. That is of course true. However, conferences usually do not allow for remote participation. Nor did we receive any such request. This may be something we can suggest for the next conference, 7APCEI. We should nonetheless keep in mind that the required logistics would substantially complicate the organisation of the conference, and probably would not have desirable impact on the activities.

4. The evaluator suggests that another colloquium could have been organised at a later date to receive feedback from a wider audience that could have contributed to the project. The timing of the grant had been originally planned to allow dissemination of findings at 6APCEI in the latter part of the project. Therefore, we did not budget for another colloquium. Holding a colloquium even later in the project would have achieved dissemination goals but we would not be able to fully benefit at that late stage from feedback received. In line with our student focus, our more urgent attention was on the establishment of the student society and disseminating our findings to students, rather than provide a forum for academic discussion. Having said that, we would also like to point out that a number of dissemination activities are indeed being taking place via the AIMA that we established. Glimpses of this can be obtained from its Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/AIMAMQ>
5. We have also received additional feedback from the director of SIBT as well as the participants from the 6APCEI conference that we organised as well as the Academic Integrity at Macquarie Ambassadors (AIMA). These are discussed in the Appendix H.

Finally, we note evaluation is ongoing beyond the life of the OLT project. This further critical evaluation concerns evaluation of the success of the project that is only possible over a more extended time period. The goal was to create a student driven society but its contribution to the academic and social purposes of the HE institution in which it sits will only become apparent over time. Similarly, take up of the resources developed to create thriving cognate societies in other HE institutions will be an important indicator of the impact of the project.

The project team at MQ will continue to nurture the established student society. As a student society, none of the investigators (academic staff) can hold a position of responsibility in the AIMA. However, the project manager Ms. Saddiqui who is also a PhD candidate at Macquarie is the chair (and mentor) of AIMA. So the project team can indirectly monitor the activities and evolution of this society, and provide very high-level guidance. This relationship is also protected and facilitated by the way in which the five-years of seed-funding has been set up. The seed-funding for the student society provided by the OLT is controlled by Macquarie University. Access to the funding by the society will require informal annual progress reports from the AIMA. This will ensure we remain in the loop and are able to capture useful data on the societies activities and progress. This data will be reported in one or more future publications so that we can disseminate our ongoing experience on nurturing and advocating academic integrity at the grass root level.

Conclusion and Recommendations

A review of the literature into academic integrity management approaches typically employed in Australian universities has highlighted a shift away from a 'catch and punish' philosophy, to a more educative approach focussed on prevention. Within a climate of renewed industry focus on learning and teaching standards, and quality and consistency in university programs, past research in Australia (Bretag et al., 2011; Grigg 2009; Kaktins 2013; Marsden, Carroll & Neill, 2005) has looked at the types of academic integrity policies in place and student views regarding academic integrity environments at their institutions.

Although proactive approaches to managing academic integrity are certainly a step in the right direction, it remains that student input and participation in academic integrity management processes is a key, missing component. Participation in this sense involves more than mere consultation (and there is a paucity of evidence to suggest that student consultation in academic integrity policy and management is occurring to any great extent). Meaningfully student participation involves listening to student experiences regarding how they feel about academic integrity, what they know about it and how they interact with it, and then discussing with students the ways by which institutions can facilitate collaborations and partnerships with students in academic integrity. Such initiatives would support a holistic approach to managing academic integrity. A preference for a holistic approach has not just been expressed by researchers, but by the students themselves (Bretag et al., 2013).

As we mentioned earlier, the goal of this project was not just to propose a method of reducing instances of breaches, but to create novel ways for students to play an active role in the dissemination of academic integrity concepts and information to their peers. And in doing so, it is hoped that students would have an opportunity to shape the academic integrity culture of their institutions, to motivate their peers to feel invested in academic integrity, and as such will be better positioned to take ownership of the institution's academic integrity failures and successes. The two main aims of the project's methodology were, firstly, to uncover student values, perceptions and experiences of the academic integrity environment at their enrolled institutions so that informed, peer-led approaches to engaging students in academic integrity could be devised.

Secondly, the project aimed to nurture student leadership in academic integrity through the formation of a grass-roots level student society tasked with promoting and championing academic integrity within an institution, and to create resources from this endeavour that are generalizable across the sector.

The study methodology employed four stages to achieve these aims—Stage 1 student survey of 5538 students across four institutions, Stage 2 student focus groups involving 40 students at three institutions, and Stage 2 interviews of 45 staff and students in (direct and indirect) academic integrity support and student representation roles across 22 Australian universities. The study has revealed what students and staff perceive about academic integrity in terms of values, responsibilities, prevalence and preferences for how students want to learn about academic integrity. These findings will be useful to HEIs who are looking to improve their students' engagement with academic integrity. Students and staff also provided their thoughts on the viability of the student society concept.

Stages 1, 2 and 3 provided findings that answered the bulk of the Project's research questions, while Stage 4 demonstrated the practical aspects of how an academic integrity student society can be created. Past findings from the literature and the data gathered from all four stages has been used to inform the creation of *the Academic Integrity Matters Ambassadors (AIMA)*.

Project dissemination took place through an academic integrity conference (6APCEI), presentations, a conference paper, abstracts, events held on campus, and will continue to occur through a proposed Springer publication on academic integrity that includes a special section on student participation in academic integrity. Another important vehicle for dissemination was the Stage 3 interviews. There were 37 staff members involved in this stage from 22 institutions around Australia, all of whom worked directly or indirectly in supporting academic integrity. In recruiting participants for the interviews, project aims were discussed and many interviewees expressed a keen interest in the novel approach being taken by the Project Team.

The Project underwent formative and summative evaluation. In addition to findings that answered the research questions, feedback gathered from students through Stages 1 and 2 was used to make sure that the project approach remained on track, that intended outcomes in the Project's Theory of Change Framework aligned with what the students' indicated they wanted. Stage 3 interviews, meanwhile, provided valuable feedback from the other stakeholder group that was likely be the drivers of similar initiatives at other institutions—staff members working in and around academic integrity and student leaders. Interviews took place over the course of two months, prior to the formation of AIMA and provided the Project Team with much to consider. Interviewees were intrigued and at times, sceptical about the prospect of an academic integrity student society, and all 45 participants opted to be updated as to the outcome of the project. Summative evaluation was gathered from dissemination events such as the 6APCEI, and the AIMA brainstorming and recruitment luncheon, and research activities (i.e., SIBT's participation feedback). Having only launched AIMA at the end of February this year, the student society's activities are yet to undergo formal evaluation, but the Project Team have enabled this pending evaluation by enlisting the Project Manager to include a case study

and evaluation of AIMA as a component of her doctoral thesis in Education (to be completed in 2015).








The Society currently comprises 28 members with an Executive of 13. AIMA is the third chapter and first international chapter of the US--based Academic Integrity Matters Student Organisation, based at the University of California, San Diego, and founded by a project collaborator Dr Tricia Bertram Gallant. The AIMA Executive is currently in the process of drafting the AIMA Constitution and plans to launch the bulk of activities in the second semester at MQ. It is hoped that AIMA's successes, experiences and evaluation outcomes will inform similar initiatives at other institutions. In addition to the creation of AIMA, Table 1 lists the status of the Project's other deliverables.

Recommendations

Based on the study findings, the Project Team would like to put forward the following recommendations:

1. HEI institutions should review their academic integrity management approaches to gauge the extent of student participation in these processes with the aim of providing more leadership opportunities for students.
2. HEIs should assess the methods and modes currently used to disseminate academic integrity information to students, with emphasis on utilising a range of methods including interactive online activities, in-class discussions with plenty of practical examples, and discipline specific workshops or seminars (held during orientation and/or at other times).
3. Staff should be made aware that some students are prepared to play a more meaningful and genuinely collaborative role in disseminating and promoting academic integrity.
4. Institutions should explore the possible role of (or indeed, identify) Academic Integrity Champions in driving academic integrity initiatives
5. HEIs that seek to implement academic integrity student societies should make use of existing resources available to assist this initiative (e.g. collaborating with IAMSO or AIMA) so that similar initiatives can learn from each other and are not operating in isolation.

Table 1: Project Deliverables

Major Project Deliverables	Status
1. A study to identify attitudes and practices of students and staff regarding academic integrity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stage 1 Student Survey • Stage 2 Student Focus Groups • Stage 3 Staff and Student Interviews 	
2. Review of the literature and other relevant resources with a particular focus existing academic-integrity management approaches	
3. Guidelines for how to establish academic integrity societies will be produced based on the study results. Higher Education Institutions (HEI) will be able to use these guidelines to develop similar initiatives. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Generalisable Theory of Change</i> model for setting up an academic integrity student society • Detailed account of application of Theory of Change Framework in the setting up of an academic integrity student society 	
4. Online and publicly accessible resources to support Output 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 videos on academic integrity student societies • <i>Quick Start</i> brochure on setting up an academic integrity student society • Information Booklet 	
5. A special track of the Sixth Asia Pacific Forum on Educational Integrity devoted to academic integrity. This forum will be used to disseminate project findings	
6. Student leadership in academic integrity is to be established at any of the participating institutions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The establishment of AIMA at MQ 	
Additional Project Deliverables	
Project website containing summarised project findings and resources	
Evaluation of student society	Pending

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Note: Following the academic tradition, the references are provided after the main body of text. Unusually perhaps, most citations to these items are in the appendices.

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