

# Visualising academic integrity: The shape of academic integrity policy and practice at three Australian universities

**Ruth Walker**

University of Wollongong, Wollongong, Australia  
rwalker@uow.edu.au

**Robyn Yucel**

La Trobe University, Melbourne, Australia  
[r.yucel@latrobe.edu.au](mailto:r.yucel@latrobe.edu.au)

**Judith Gullifer**

Charles Sturt University, Bathurst, Australia  
jgullifer@csu.edu.au

**Julianne East**

La Trobe University, Melbourne, Australia  
[j.east@latrobe.edu.au](mailto:j.east@latrobe.edu.au)

An effective academic integrity policy does not stand alone. Rather, it works in a complex network of interrelated activities from the management of academic misconduct to the provision of educational interventions. It also relies on a range of stakeholders having designated responsibilities and a shared commitment to the policy e.g. students, teaching staff, researchers, learning advisors, librarians, and governance specialists. While at first glance there may be broad similarities, each university's academic integrity policy has been developed and is implemented in context-specific ways. Both the literature and experience has shown that there is a need for deliberate coordination of the policy and collection of practices in a complex university network so as to ensure that academic integrity is protected and that misconduct does not slip through the cracks.

This session showcases the work of three Australian universities which have recently updated their academic integrity policies: UOW (2016), CSU (2015) and La Trobe (2015). Following their work on the policies, representatives from the three universities undertook a peer evaluation of the implementation of the policies in their different institutional contexts. The key questions of the project were: What are the factors that shape the implementation of academic integrity policy at different institutions? How do the different elements of an effective academic integrity model interact and interconnect to form a coherent integrity system? What would this academic integrity system look like?

Drawing on the five elements of an effective academic policy identified by the OLT Academic Integrity Standards Project (AISP 2012), the team collaboratively went on to develop a framework to evaluate the implementation of a policy by classifying the different stakeholder groups and activities. The team then used methods drawn from the analyses of public integrity systems (Six and Lawton 2010; Brown and Head 2008) to chart a triad of relationships at each university, including policy connections, operational activities, and stakeholder accountabilities. Data analysis was then undertaken using a network visualisation tool to present 'maps' of the interconnections between stakeholder groups, academic integrity education and academic misconduct prevention activities at the three different universities. The resulting maps show the network of activities and relationships involved in academic integrity policy and practices and are useful in determining the overall coherence and effectiveness of an individual university's academic integrity system, by identifying areas of strengths and weaknesses in the policy and its related implementation strategies.