Abstract
This paper discusses some of the academic integrity violations and education cheating issues that transnational faculty members and administrators may face in teaching and administering transnational higher education provision in a foreign country. It attempts to provide and share some best practices that are already implemented in a real case of international branch campus in Uzbekistan. It is hoped that this sharing of practices will benefit and prepare both transnational faculty members and administrators with academic integrity to handle and manage students more efficiently and effectively in order to minimise academic malpractices under the transnational education programme.

Keywords: transnational higher education; academic integrity violation; cheating

Introduction
International higher education has been undergoing major transition over the past two decades. The evolution is attributed to the increasing global demand for internationally recognised higher education qualifications and the advancement of worldwide network communications and technological innovations that lead to the strategic globalisation of higher education institutions (HEIs). Students now have more choices in selecting their foreign universities even within their home countries, i.e., either through attending classes at the international branch campuses (IBCs), collaborative public / private institutions, or via open and distance online / e-learning platforms. On this basis, foreign university academic programmes are mobile and cross national borders instead of the students. With fully interconnected campuses around the world, the foreign university has a larger population of international students and allows its students to move and study at different branch campuses to fulfil the requirements of obtaining the same degree irrespective of the campus locations (Hawawini, 2011).

The availability of transnational higher education (THE) business opportunities attract many new players including public and private, international and national, profit and not-for-profit organisations with varied alliances or partnerships providing innovative approaches to teaching and delivery. Indeed, foreign universities take on new roles and functions embedded in the same socio-economic environment as business organisations. Market saturation, hyper competition, raising resource costs, global spread of best practices, power of global brands, growing expectations of stakeholders are the new realities the universities are facing (Amaral et al., 2003). Under these circumstances foreign universities increasingly behave as business organisations – international orientation is becoming a premise of their competitiveness. Indeed, the elements of commercialisation in higher education are widespread and multifaceted, and the higher education market is well established as a global phenomenon (Hemsley-Brown & Oplatka, 2006).
At present, there are four IBCs in Tashkent, the capital of Uzbekistan, offering students in this post-Soviet independent state and other republics in Central Asia with specialised courses in business, economics, information technology and engineering. Within the IBC perspectives, students attend classes and receive face-to-face teaching to attain a qualification from the foreign HEIs, which is an alternative form of distance learning programme. Nonetheless, the surprising issue that is commonly raised by transnational faculty members, invigilators and administrators is none other than academic integrity violation, especially student cheating on exams and plagiarising on coursework / assignment. This paper attempts to address these particular issues that transnational faculty members and invigilators often encounter. It also discusses some of the counter measures that may be adopted to administer and manage the students thereby enhancing their academic integrity. The methodology used in this paper is based on the author’s ten years of personal work experiences in the provisions and two and a half years of managing the entire academic processes of IBCs both in Sri Lanka and Uzbekistan. Most of these claims/recommendations were raised and discussed during various dialogue sessions both with the exam staff and transnational faculty members/ local tutors. Some good methods / practices were recommended and implemented with effective outcomes. By sharing best academic and management practices with a real case IBC, it is hoped that both transnational faculty members, invigilators and administrators will eventually manage students more efficiently and effectively with confidence in order to minimise academic malpractices under the transnational higher education programme. This paper provides a new reference offering a comparative study for future research in the context of academic integrity violation in transnational education.

**Literature Review**

Understanding student cheating is particularly important given trends that show cheating is widespread and on the rise. Academic scholars and researchers have found that three fourths of the students had engaged in one or more incidents of academic dishonesty and the most significant was the explicit forms of test or exam cheating (McCabe et al., 2001). For business schools, studies have revealed that student cheating rates range from more than 70 percent (Nonis & Swift, 2001) to 91 percent (Callahan, 2010). The business schools are deemed to have the highest estimates of cheating among students (O’Leary & Pangemanan, 2007) and these estimates have been increasing over the past few decades (McCabe et al., 2006). Studies have also found some of the possible reasons of this increasing trend of students cheating which include

- over commercialisation of business schools (Gioia & Corley, 2002),
- business / social networking coupled with the advances of network computing (Drinan & Gallant, 2008),
- false consensus that fellow classmates are cheating (Teixeira & Rocha, 2010), and even
- redefining cheating (Conlin, 2007) such as re-engineering.

Disturbing increases were also found in collaborative cheating, i.e., unpermitted collaboration among students on written assignments (Conlin, 2007).

Research has revealed that individual factors such as gender, academic performance, study attitude and behaviour, competitive achievement striving, as well as self-esteem can significantly influence the prevalence of cheating (McCabe et al., 2001). Nonetheless, contextual factors such as faculty responses to cheating, sanction threats, social learning, and honour codes were also shown to influence cheating at HEIs.
Contextual Factor: Peer’s Behaviour

The contextual factors include the existence of an honour code, student understanding and acceptance of a school’s academic integrity policy, perceived certainty that cheaters will be reported, perceived severity of penalties, and the degree to which students perceive that their peers engage in cheating behaviour (Gino et al., 2009). This last variable, peer behaviour, was found to show the most significant relation with student cheating in HEIs. Based on social learning theory (Bandura, 1986), the strong influence of peers’ behaviour may suggest that academic dishonesty not only is learned from observing the behaviour of peers, but that peers’ behaviour provides a kind of normative support for cheating. The fact that others are cheating may also suggest that, in such a climate, the non-cheater feels left at a disadvantage. Thus cheating may come to be viewed as an acceptable way for getting and staying ahead.

The contextual factors, especially peer cheating behaviour, peer disapproval of cheating behaviour, and perceived severity of penalties for cheating, were significantly more influential than the individual factors, i.e., age, gender, academic performance, participation in extracurricular activities etc. Peer-related factors once again emerged as the most significant correlate of cheating behaviour.

Contextual Factor: Honour Codes

Research has found that there were less cheating occurred in honour code environments (McCabe et al., 2001). However, some HEIs have no honour codes yet they have the lowest levels of cheating, other HEIs have long-standing honour codes yet they have the higher levels of cheating. Despite the apparent paradox, the institution that does not have a formal honour code has a well developed student culture that emphasises many of the elements found at code institutions and encouraged academic integrity without instituting a formal code. In contrast, the honour code institution, although it may have a 100-year-old honour code tradition, fails to adequately communicate the essence of its code to students and to indoctrinate them into the campus culture. Therefore, it is not the mere existence of an honour code that is important in deterring cheating in HEIs. An effective honour code must be more than mere window dressing; a truly effective code must be well implemented and strongly embedded in the student culture. Furthermore, a formal code is not the only way to achieve the desired result. As suggested earlier, a strong culture of academic integrity can exist at an institution that has no formal code but communicates the importance that the institution places on integrity in other ways.

Role of Individual Factors

Students at HEIs use a variety of neutralisation techniques, i.e., rationalisation, denial, deflecting blame to others, condemning the accusers, to explain away their dishonest behaviour (McCabe, 1993). In addition, younger students tend to cheat more than senior students, for instance many 1st- and 2nd-year students who find themselves in large lecture courses, perhaps enrolled in an elective, which they really do not want to take in the first place, find it very easy to rationalise cheating (McCabe & Trevino, 1997). They often see a lot of cheating among others in these courses, faculty members cannot possibly monitor all of the students in such large classes, and the students often are bored with the material. In contrast, 3rd- and 4th-year students seem to be more enthusiastic about their courses and faculty members. At smaller HEIs, these students talk about the personal relationships they have developed with faculty members in their major, often making it harder to consider cheating in those courses. Another individual factor that has received much attention in the literature is gender, but studies have found no difference between men and women cheating in HEIs (McCabe & Trevino, 1997). In addition, students with lower academic performance are more prone to cheating than students with higher academic
performance. Furthermore, students engage in intercollegiate athletics and other extracurricular activities are also more prone to cheating, perhaps reflecting the time demands that these activities place on students and their decision to take various ‘short cuts’ to stay up to date and remain competitive in their coursework. Other factors that can influence cheating include pressure to get high grades, parental pressures, a desire to excel, pressure to get a job, laziness, a lack of responsibility, a lack of character, poor self-image, a lack of pride in a job well done, and a lack of personal integrity (McCabe et al., 1999).

**Measures to Counter Academic Dishonesty**

Cheating can be most effectively addressed at the institutional level. In many HEIs, the fundamental elements of an academic honour code may be a particular useful tool for HEIs that seek to reduce student cheating. At a broader level, HEIs can consider ways of creating an ethical institution – one that includes clear communication of rules and standards, moral socialisation of institution members, and mutual respect between students and faculty members, and one that extends certain privileges to its students (e.g., unsupervised exams, self-scheduled exams, etc.). However, building an ethical institution also might involve techniques such as creating a hidden curriculum in which students not only receive formal ethics instruction but also learn by actively discussing ethical issues and acting on them. The hidden curriculum might include allowing students to participate in the many opportunities for teaching and learning about ethical issues that arise in the day-to-day operations of an educational institution. In such an environment, messages about ethics and values are implicitly sent to and received by students throughout their university experiences, both in and out of the classroom (Trevino & McCabe, 1994).

Cheating behaviour can be effectively managed in examination. Faculty members can pursue numerous strategies, including clearly communicating expectations regarding cheating behaviour, establishing policies regarding appropriate conduct, and encouraging students to abide by those policies. Researchers have suggested some principles of academic integrity for faculty members which include (McCabe et al., 1999)

- affirm the importance of academic integrity,
- foster a love of learning,
- treat students as an end in themselves,
- foster an environment of trust in the classroom,
- encourage student responsibility for academic integrity,
- clarify expectations for students,
- develop fair and relevant forms of assessment,
- reduce opportunities to engage in academic dishonesty,
- challenge academic dishonesty when it occurs, and
- help define and support campus-wide academic integrity standards.

These principles represent strategies that faculty members can employ to minimise cheating in exams. Several of these factors point to the importance of student involvement in reducing cheating behaviour. Indeed, involving both faculty members and students in an ongoing dialogue about academic integrity may be one of the most important components of an honour code tradition. Some HEIs do little more than inform their students where in the student handbook they can find the institution’s policy on academic integrity honour code. In contrast, use orientation sessions to convey the message to the students the tradition of honour on campus and what will be expected of them as the newest students of the institution.
Discussion

**Higher Education Reform and IBCs Establishment in Uzbekistan**

With regard to Uzbekistan higher education reforms, there were challenges due to the historical relationships with Russia which remained intertwined and yet increasingly more complicated in the post-Soviet context. Higher education reforms may be perceived to distance HEIs from Russia’s influence and embrace an international higher education standard, such as the European Union (EU) standards, policies, and practices. The Russian government attempted to maintain its influence through the implementation of different foreign policies with various degrees of intensity and success. Such foreign policies included the provision of Russian scholarships for students to study in Russia and the establishment of branch campuses within Uzbekistan for students to study Russian academic programmes.

On the other hand, the EU, especially the Bologna process, has played an increasingly important role in determining the direction of higher education reforms in Central Asia (Silova, 2011). As such, Central Asia republics are in the context of these multiple, conflicting, and overlapping international influences that make the complex reconfiguration of the post-Soviet higher education system more difficult.

Indeed, most of the Central Asian republics are still keeping many of the Soviet educational traditions and practices, while creating their own unique models of higher education system (Silova, 2011). In Uzbekistan, higher education reforms have been primarily based on internal references to Soviet educational practices. Basically, Soviet education is still explicitly a more comfortable system that is believed to offer hope to overcome the current educational crisis. In fact, there is an increasing tendency for reverting back to the Soviet past as a strategy for not undertaking substantive reforms in higher education (Tomusk, 2008). In this context, Russia continues to serve as a reference for a certain higher education reform trajectories in Uzbekistan. In particular, Russia remains the first choice destination for many Uzbek students, although an increasing number of students, especially those with English language abilities, choose to study in Western Europe or North America. In addition, Russia has established branch campuses of its universities in Uzbekistan to respond to the demand for education in Russian language. The notable ones include Moscow State University of Lomonosov, Plekhanov Russian University of Economics and Russian State Oil and Gas University of Gubkin, all in Tashkent. These universities undoubtedly influence higher education in Uzbekistan by diversifying the available study options and increasing academic competition. They are also increasingly competing with newly established local universities and other HEIs that have affiliation with international universities especially IBCs.

Moreover, Russia’s influence has been increasingly overshadowed by the Bologna process, which has become a major consideration for Uzbekistan to adopt the European higher education system. The establishments of UK Westminster International University Tashkent (WIUT) in 2002 and the Italian Turin Tashkent Polytechnic University (TTPU) in 2009 illustrate this claim. More intensive cooperation between the EU and Uzbekistan began in 2007, when the European Education Initiative was launched as part of the EU-Central Asia Strategy (Jones, 2011). By 2009, the initiative had prioritised higher and vocational education and emphasised links with the Bologna process.

Uzbekistan made changes to the structure of its education system in the number of years for different levels of education. The government has added one more year to the compulsory Secondary Specialised Vocational Education (SSVE). The higher education has also changed to two levels system, i.e., bachelor’s and master’s degree studies. The introduction of bachelor’s and
master’s degree system to the current 76 HEIs has benchmarked the higher education in Uzbekistan against the international standards. At present, graduates of national educational institutions receive equal opportunity to study at leading universities around the world. Since the beginning of the 2013/14 academic year, the scientific world of Uzbekistan adopts the international standard on the criterion of admission to the PhD programme and the requirements of obtaining the degree, i.e., dissertation with academic / scientific publications in international journals.

In practice, however, higher education reforms in Uzbekistan remain painstakingly slow. Uzbek universities continue to face major problems including low salaries, lack of funding, stagnating curricula, and increasing corruption. In turn, this has slowed down implementation of any major reforms. There have been no significant changes in how HEIs are managed, or how teaching, learning and research are conducted (Silova, 2011; Brunner & Tillett, 2003). Within this context, public universities are at risk of losing relevance, while the newly established private institutions do not always ensure the necessary quality (Silova, 2011; Brunner & Tillett, 2003). In other words, higher education reforms have been largely unsuccessful. As a result, Uzbekistan has not only remained on the periphery, but has in fact moved from the Soviet to the global periphery (Tomusk, 2011).

Uzbekistan has attempted to re-position itself along the imaginary axis of East/West or core/periphery. Besides the Russian IBCs, the Management Development Institute of Singapore Tashkent (MDIST) was established in 2007 and South Korea Inha University Tashkent (IUT) was set up in 2014. These establishments illustrate the higher education reform efforts have not only moving toward adopting the East and West but the international system. Indeed, Uzbekistan continues to grapple with increasingly colliding higher education trajectories, stemming from the multiple influences of Russian, EU, and other international policies. From Uzbekistan standpoint, Russia continues to be seen as a more advanced (Eastern) country, which inevitably places Uzbekistan at the global periphery. It is exactly this shift from the imperial periphery of the Soviet Union to the global periphery that connects Russia and Uzbekistan in the broader context of post-Soviet higher education reforms. It is not necessarily a shift that Uzbekistan has been actively seeking, but it is something that the country has to deal with.

Practices to Counter Academic Integrity Violation

The most common form of cheating in business schools, and in particular an IBC in Uzbekistan, which is the context of our study, is collaborative cheating that refers to cheating in group coursework or assignment that is increasingly becoming a core assessment component in business programmes that replaces examination. One possible example might be for the group members to engage a business consultant to prepare the coursework / assignment and submit the piece of work as their own. Moreover, students are less likely to consider such action as violations of academic integrity, instead they claim that the lecturer / tutor is responsible for allowing them to cheat when coursework / assignment must be completed outside the classroom (Hudd et al., 2009), a common characteristic of virtually all group projects. Interestingly, some academics have suggested that what may be perceived as a group cheating in fact is simply using available resources in an efficient way (Conlin, 2007). The other argument is the changing definition among students of what constitutes plagiarism. In general, student understanding of appropriate citation techniques seems to have changed, for example, although most students understand that quoting someone’s work word for word demands a citation, they seem to be less clear on the need to cite the presentation of someone else’s ideas when the students present them in their own words.
Despite the potential for collaborative cheating posed by group coursework / assignment, it has become an increasingly popular assessment method for transnational institutions / IBCs seeking to simulate the group-learning environment (Stone & Bailey, 2007). Furthermore, engaging students to work effectively and efficiently in groups should be encouraged in IBCs due to the ubiquitous use of teamwork in the real business world (Stone & Bailey, 2007). Engaging a business consultant to perform a task for an organisation is considered as a form of business strategy; nonetheless, it has to be clear to all students that engaging a business consultant to write a group assignment for students is considered as academic integrity violation.

Peers’ behaviour is the strongest influence in collaborative cheating (Gino et al., 2009). Students in a group often develop powerful group norms and high levels of cohesiveness, each of which may support a strong sense of loyalty to the group members. As such, when a group member cheats or otherwise behaves inappropriately, other group members are unlikely to prevent the behaviour or even report or confess (McCabe et al., 2006). Such cohesiveness among group members or even a cohort of students may further encourage academic misconduct. In addition, the probability of an individual student’s cheating is lower than collaborative cheating (Gino et al., 2009). This further supports that peer dynamics actually have higher influencing power for a student’s decision to cheat (McCabe & Trevino, 1997; Pillutla & Thau, 2009). Perhaps of greatest importance from a practical perspective is that an institution’s ability to develop a shared understanding and acceptance of its academic integrity policies has a significant and substantive impact on student perceptions of their peers’ behaviour. Thus, information containing the rules and regulations of the IBC aimed at distributing, explaining, and gaining students and faculty members’ acceptance of academic integrity policies may be particularly useful.

Cheating may be influenced by a range of factors, one of which is their estimates of the likelihood that fellow students and faculty members will report their dishonest behaviour (Dee & Jacob, 2012). Studies have shown that approximately six percent of students (Wajda-Johnston et al., 2001) and lesser than 43 percent of faculty members (McCabe, 1993) would confront a student about cheating. Reasons cited include bureaucratic or adversarial procedures, lack of administrative supports, unfavourable effect on teaching evaluations, poor publicity, sour relationships, or fear of lawsuits (Briggs et al., 2013). Despite a commercial business school, the IBC under study encourages faculty members to report any students who cheat during exam by confiscating student identity (ID) cards. These students are subsequently expected to appear in the inquiry conducted by the Committee of Unfair Practices, and if found guilty, students will be penalised accordingly.

The barrier in confronting students cheating in exams in the IBC is most likely to be due to students’ respective stages of moral development, which is perceived as the other possible factor that influences cheating (Dee & Jacob, 2012). Cheating in the form of talking is very common in exams in the IBC. Confronting students in such case is more challenging as students may argue that they just want to borrow an eraser from their course mates and there is no evidence for cheating. To deal with talking in exams, invigilators are also empowered to confiscate student IDs when they are caught talking and the students will be issued a warning letter from the Committee of Unfair Practices stating that repeated action will lead to expulsion from the IBC. The fact is that faculty member reporting is a key factor in minimising students cheating in exam.

The other factor that influences cheating may be students’ estimates of the severity of penalties that might be imposed (Dee & Jacob, 2012). For the IBC under study, the official penalty options range from awarding a ‘0’ mark to the assessed component, re-submission of coursework / assignment or re-sit of exam paper with marks capped at 40 percent to the expulsion of students from the IBC. In addition, there is a cost to pay for re-sitting of exam papers. Therefore, the
more costly the penalty is, the less likely the students will cheat. Furthermore, students that succeeded in cheating are more likely to cheat in the future (Nonis & Swift, 2001) and the earlier the students are engaged in cheating undetected, the more rapidly and intensely they tend to adopt it (Carrell et al., 2008). As such, if there is a lack of detection, this may encourage repeat behaviour, especially in those who might not have been willing to cheat on their own.

Cheating propensities will decrease if students have some sense of perceived risk and fear. Invigilators can have an impact on cheating by reminding students about the policies on cheating, i.e., zero tolerance (Galles et al., 2003) and by following through with behaviour that is consistent with these policies (Chapman et al., 2004). In the IBC under study, before an exam begins, student body check is carried out by the security guards to remove any hidden cheating notes. In the beginning of the exam, announcement is made to all students stating that cheating is a serious offence and may lead to expulsion of students from the IBC. In addition, declaration forms declaring that students will not cheat during exam have to be signed and are acknowledged by all students before they are allowed to commence writing in the exam. Furthermore, during the exam, students are escorted by invigilators for toilet break and body checked again by the security guards before re-entering the exam hall. Toilet breaks are carefully monitored with only one student is allowed at a time, i.e., no two students are allowed to go together, the time a student having toilet break is recorded on the register list, and all toilets are screened before commencement of exam to remove any unauthorised study materials hidden in the flashing system. Cheating notes are difficult to be detected by body search as students have various creative ways of hiding them. As such, invigilators are reminded to be alert all the time and on guard to walk around to ensure no students attempt to cheat. If any students caught talking and cheating, their student ID cards will be removed and the students will have to be present in the inquiry conducted by the Committee of Unfair Practices.

The greater the psychological safety (Pearsall & Ellis, 2011) felt by students, the more likely they will involve in collaborative cheating. That is, as long as one student started talking, the other students in the exam hall will be negatively influenced and will participate in the cheating process. If the situation is not well controlled, it may lead to serious disasters. The worst case scenario is the possibility of the entire cohort of students may walk out of the exam hall, claiming that the exam paper is out of content. At the end, all students may sign on a petition letter demanding the IBC to review the exam paper, protesting to void the exam paper, and requesting to sit for a fresh new exam paper, be treated as first attempt, not to be considered as a supplementary paper, not to be capped at 40 percent, and not to charge any supplementary paper fees. This incident actually happened in the IBC under study. One way to counter this effect is to remind the students to sit through the exam for at least the first hour and advise the students to report the incident to the Student Services unit after the exam ends. The students are allowed to make feedbacks to the IBC if the majority of students feel that the exam settings are unfavourable. Nonetheless, this can only be done after the exam is over so as to seek for a mitigating solution.

Creative students are good at rationalising their cheating behaviour. It is common nowadays for university students to submit their coursework / assignments to Turnitin.com for plagiarism check. And it is also a common practice among students to cheat by translating articles in foreign languages, such as Russian, into English so that the plagiarism check outcome would have very low similarity index. Despite low similarity index, some students may fail their coursework / assignments due to irrelevant answers to questions. Unsatisfied students sometimes make appeal against the lecturers / tutors claiming that as long as the similarity index meets the university requirement, the students deserve a pass for their course assignments, in a way challenging the academic judgement of the lecturers / tutors.
The common false consensus (Chapman et al., 2004) is the students’ perception that they should just work towards meeting the required similarity index of, say 10 percent, imposed by the university in all coursework / assignments submitted to Turnitin.com for plagiarism check. At the end, when the outcome of the similarity index came out to be more than 10 percent due to the entire cohort of students have their coursework / assignments submitted earlier than them, these students begin to argue with the lecturers / tutors that they should not be penalised for not meeting the plagiarism requirement due to some similar contents that the students have submitted earlier. These students have failed to realise the importance of working towards lower similarity index, i.e., much lower than 10 percent, in order to secure a passing grade. Students have weak incentives to learn what truly constitutes plagiarism, and therefore, often plagiarise unknowingly, in other words, students plagiarism has become a rational ignorance (Dee & Jacob, 2012).

For both individual cheating (Kerkvliet & Sigmund, 1999) and collaborative group cheating (Jiao et al., 2011), students false consensus, peer pressure, time constraints, parental expectations, group exclusion and various other factors that the literature suggests lead students to cheat. False consensus is students’ perception of cheating among fellow classmates; this perception influences their involvement in academic dishonesty (Gino et al, 2009; Pearsall & Ellis, 2011). On the other hand, students excluded from a group will try to hurt the group; those who are afraid of being excluded will try to help the group in order to minimise their possibility of exclusion (Pillutla & Thau, 2009). One way they accomplish this is to take risks that other group members are unwilling to take, such as violating academic integrity. Nonetheless, students know what cheating is and they believe it is morally wrong. Yet, they continue to cheat because they feel that the benefits outweigh the potential costs, and they believe cheating to be the norm (Chapman et al., 2004).

Conclusion

There is a common ‘non-understanding’ of Western concepts, especially on originality and academic integrity (Szilagyi, 2014) among students in Uzbekistan, and resulted in the question of whether these concepts are absent from their ideological heritage. Most students entering HEIs arrive with some experiences with cheating in their previous schools, or at least knowledge of cheating by their peers. It is believed that most new students begin their university experience with a positive attitude about the need for academic integrity, in spite of their experience with cheating in their previous schools. However, if they observe cheating by the 2nd-, 3rd-, and 4th-year students and see faculty members who seem to ignore what appears to be obvious cheating, their idealistic view is likely to degenerate rather quickly. The reality of the cheating they observe convinces them that university is not that different from their previous schools after all, at least with regard to academic integrity. If they are to survive and be competitive in this new environment, they must play by the same rules as everyone else.

On code institutions, however, new students generally will see significantly less cheating than on non-code institutions and most begin to internalise the new institution ethic. Although some will eventually engage in academic dishonesty, for most it will be after they have had an opportunity to think about their new institution’s ethic and how cheating would be a significant violation of the trust that the new institution has placed in them. To violate that trust might jeopardise the many privileges they receive as a student of the institution. The real power of honour codes may be in the desire of students to belong to such an institution, and thus their general willingness to abide by its rules. In general, HEIs that do not, at the very least, engage their students in a meaningful dialogue about academic integrity are likely to experience the persistent levels of academic dishonesty identified in virtually all research on cheating in university.
Nonetheless, honour codes are not a panacea and will not work on every HEI. No HEI can assume that its students will take the time to familiarise themselves with campus rules about academic integrity on their own. Even if they did, an institution’s failure to emphasise for its students the high value it places on academic integrity sends the message that it is not a high priority. Such institutions should not be surprised if they experience above-average levels of academic dishonesty. Each HEI must send a consistent message to its students that academic integrity is expected and that cheating will result in negative consequences. To do this, HEIs must support faculty members who raise allegations of student dishonesty and must be willing to employ sanctions that have both significant educational and deterrence value. In short, the institution must convince students that cheating will be met with strong disapproval. To do this, the institution must be prepared to hold students accountable for any cheating in which they engage.

Academic integrity policy regarding cheating will only be taken seriously if they are enforced (Whitely & Keith-Spiegel, 2001). The policy will assist the faculty members in making their students responsible for upholding academic integrity. It is important to note that professors’ actions to be one of the most important factors in students’ development of ethical value (David et al, 1990). Faculty members’ and fellow students’ behaviour in the classroom have a more profound impact on student actions than they may realise.

References


