Research Training for Academic Integrity: when, what, how?

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Academic integrity is required of students even before they have any clear idea of the culture of research and what this entails. In this paper I examine recent literature on academic integrity and plagiarism for examples of scaffolded approaches to research training and raise the question as to when this training should begin, what it might consist of and how it could be implemented. I examine the concepts of academic integrity and academic misconduct and the application of these concepts in dealing with student plagiarism. I will contrast the attitude of writers whose approach is to inform students of plagiarism policies and punish ‘transgressions’, with those who support the notion of a period of apprenticeship into the culture of research. I draw the conclusion that to reduce the incidence of inadvertent student plagiarism, research training needs to be an integral component of all university learning and that apprentice researchers require a period of induction into the norms and values of research without exposure to the fear of being accused of misconduct.