

Developing a Rubric to Map Academic Integrity Constructs to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

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ABSTRACT

This paper develops and validates a structured, multidimensional rubric that systematically maps academic integrity (ACIN) constructs to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Academic integrity, while central to ethical and inclusive education, has rarely been explicitly linked to global sustainability frameworks, creating a critical gap in both theory and practice. To address this, the study employed a hybrid methodology combining grounded theory, the Delphi method, and expert-informed design. Thirteen experts representing diverse disciplines and geographic regions engaged in iterative consultations through virtual and blended workshops. The process included thematic analysis, qualitative coding, and consensus-building, resulting in the identification of seven core constructs: ethical values, skills, disciplines/roles, contexts, approaches, strategies, and applications. The rubric was pilot tested across nine courses in fields such as IT project management, academic writing, public administration, and biomedical sciences. Findings confirmed its adaptability across disciplines and educational levels, with educators reporting that the framework clarified curricular gaps, surfaced hidden ethical dimensions, and strengthened connections between integrity and sustainability. Courses addressed an average of 5.8 SDGs, with one achieving alignment across all 17, demonstrating the rubric's diagnostic power and potential for comprehensive application. This study makes an original contribution by positioning academic integrity not merely as rule compliance but as a transformative competence essential to achieving the 2030 Agenda. The rubric offers educators and institutions a practical mechanism for embedding ethics into curricula, informing policy, and aligning quality assurance with international sustainability commitments.

JEL Codes:

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