

HE Academic Misconduct Process

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1. INTRODUCTION

The underpinning purpose of this process and associated policy is to ensure that academic standards are upheld with any breaches, due to academic misconduct, being dealt with fairly and consistently. The following principles apply to this process:

- The active promotion of academic integrity throughout University Centre Leeds Higher Education activities and the learning experience;
- The provision of an open and transparent process;
- The timely resolution of suspected academic misconduct cases in a fair and equitable manner;
- The assurance that students will not be disadvantaged once an instance of academic misconduct has been reported.

Allegations of Academic Misconduct within formative and summative assessments will be considered via the following stages

Informal Stage

Formal Stage

2. COMPLIANCE WITH REGULATIONS

The investigation and processing of suspected cases of academic malpractice shall be conducted in accordance with this process and which is informed by the University Centre Leeds Higher Education Academic Regulations, and shall seek to uphold the principles of fairness, consistency, equity and equal opportunities.

The handling of all suspected academic misconduct cases should normally be completed within 90 days of the start of this process.

3. IMPARTIALITY OF DECISION-MAKERS

In order to ensure impartiality in the dealing of suspected cases of academic misconduct no person shall be permitted to take part in the making of a decision regarding a case where s/he has an interest through being a member of the same academic department in which the student is registered.

4. TYPES OF ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

Academic misconduct encompasses all kinds of academic dishonesty, whether deliberate (Academic Malpractice) or unintentional (Academic Negligence), which infringes the integrity of University Centre Leeds assessment procedures.

Academic Negligence

Plagiarism

The presenting of another person's ideas or expressions without acknowledging the source. This includes internet sources.

Examples of plagiarism include:

- The inclusion in a student's work of extracts from another person's work without the use of quotation marks/and or acknowledgement of the sources(s)
- The summarising of another person's work without acknowledgement
- The substantial and unauthorised use of the ideas of another person without acknowledgement
- Self-plagiarism- when a student submits work for credit which has been submitted elsewhere for credit. This may be part of a piece of work or the entire piece of work and may have been submitted to University Centre Leeds or another institution.

Academic Malpractice

Subsequent cases of Academic Negligence

Plagiarism is considered in the first instance to be academic negligence and will be addressed in accordance with this process. If a student then submits further pieces of work deemed to contain elements that have been plagiarised, that is considered to be academic malpractice.

Collusion

Examples of collusion include:

- Students who take part in unauthorised collaboration with others, regardless of whether any advantage was gained;
- Students who present work as their own which has been purchased from a third party and presented as the student's own;
- Students who make available their own work, regardless of any financial gain. Both the giver and receiver of the work will be held to be colluding;
- Proof-reading and editing: it is a student's responsibility as author to proof-read and edit their own work. Assistance from any third party, whether a professional service or friend, family or fellow student may be regarded as collusion;
- Translation services: the use of translation services involving a third party is expressly forbidden and will be regarded as collusion. The use of translation software is permitted.

Note: special dispensation to the rules on collusion will be provided to students who are registered with a disability and who have a specific requirement agreed with Dyslexia & Disability Support Services.

Fabrication/falsification

Any student found to have tampered with official documentation, or fabricated data or other such content will be regarded as having fabricated/falsified material. This includes the content of work submitted for assessment and any records or documentation associated with academic progress such as entry statements or qualifications, false claims for exemption or mitigation, or misrepresentation of a word count or contribution to a group assessment. In some cases fabricated/falsified material may also be deemed to be professional misconduct, for example in the professions of teaching and journalism.

Research misconduct

All research which contributes to the assessment of taught courses must be conducted in an ethical and responsible manner. This includes requirements to secure ethical approval prior to the commencement of primary research, the conduct of the research, the relationship and dealings with participants and proper handling of data.

Impersonation

Any student found to be assuming the identity of a third party, or where a student is impersonated by another person, in order to gain or enable access or advantage will be deemed guilty of impersonation.

Cheating in Examinations

Any breach of the examination procedure which compromises the integrity of the assessment will be regarded as academic misconduct, regardless of whether any advantage was gained or there was any intention to do so. These principles apply equally to formal examinations and to all laboratory and class tests conducted under exam conditions.

Breaches include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Obtaining or seeking to obtain examination papers prior to the examination unless the paper has been provided as a 'seen' examination;
- Copying from another candidate or from any unauthorised material, including by use of an electronic device;
- Taking additional materials into the examination, unless prior approval has been given. This could include, but isn't limited to, printed materials, electronically stored or communicated information, or electronic devices (unless expressly permitted). Devices may include, but are not limited to, mobile telephones, smart watches, tablet computers, laptop computers, electronic dictionaries;
- Communicating, or attempting to communicate, with other candidates or with any person(s) except the invigilators;
- Any form of disruptive behaviour;
- Not following the instructions given by the examination invigilator;
- Leaving the examination room without authorisation from the examination invigilator;

Removing any material from the examination room other than items which were brought into the room by the candidate or the question paper, where permitted.

Unethical Behaviour

This includes unacceptable behaviour including:

- Breaches of confidentiality;
- Improper handling of private information collated during data collection processes;
- Failing to gain appropriate ethical clearance prior to data collection.

Theft of Materials

- Where another persons' assessed work has been used in whole or in part without permission.

Exceptional Cases

These are cases that don't easily fall into the categories listed and described above. An example of an exceptional case is where the module tutor marking the piece of work reasonably believes that the work is not the students' own (for example the work is so inconsistent with any previously produced work, or the language used in the piece is inconsistent with that used in previous pieces), but the potential sources of the work cannot be identified.

5. PRIVACY, CONFIDENTIALITY AND DATA PROTECTION

All evidence brought forward in support of an allegation should be treated with respect for the privacy of the student, and should be confidential to those members of staff concerned with the investigation of the case.

Any member of staff involved with an appeal in any capacity will ensure that the Data Protection Act 1998 is complied with at all times

6. FAIR TREATMENT

No individual under investigation through this process, whether successfully proven or otherwise, will be treated less favourably by any member of staff than if the case had not been brought. All staff involved in handling any stages of an investigation have a duty to ensure that any decision made regarding the outcome of an investigation or determination of penalty, or the way a student is treated, must not be influenced by the identification of potential academic misconduct. If evidence to the contrary is found, the member of staff may be subject to action under the Staff Disciplinary Procedure.

Where an individual believes that the investigation of a suspected case is likely to affect the relationship between a student and a member of staff, all parties will be expected to continue that relationship in a professional manner. Only in exceptional circumstances will the Dean of Higher Education consider agreeing to a request for alternative working arrangements whilst the case is being investigated.

7. ADVICE AND GUIDANCE

Individuals can obtain advice on this process from a number of sources. In particular, a Guidance Officer or representative from the Students' Union can provide advice, independent of the University Centre Leeds, including attending any hearings in support of the student. Staff can seek advice and support on understanding the process from the Higher Education Registry Office.

The Higher Education Registry Office can only provide advice to students and staff on the operation of this process.

Academic staff will not be able to provide advice to students on individual cases.

8. PROCEDURE

Inform Higher Education Registry Office

To enable swift investigation and resolution, HE Registry Office should be notified of all suspected cases as soon as is practically possible, and within **no later than one month** of the submission of the piece of work. Registry will then determine if this is the student's first, or subsequent offence, and the nature of the offence, and notify the Programme Manager of the course of action to be taken.

A copy of the students' work should be forwarded to heregistrar@ucl Leeds.ac.uk along with the Turnitin report (if available) or other evidence that highlights the potential academic misconduct that has occurred.

Registry will notify the Programme Manager of the action to be taken.

Informal Stage

Informal meeting with the student and Module Tutor/Programme Manager to deal with first alleged cases of academic negligence. This is intended to act as a warning to students and highlights a need for further development. The outcome must be reported to Registry and noted on the student's record that a formal warning has been given.

Stage 1

Meeting of the Academic Misconduct Panel

Considers the following:

- Cases progressed from Informal Stage
- Second or further cases

A Panel will be convened with the following constitution:

- HE Registrar (or nominee) (Chair)
- Programme Manager (or nominee) from the programme area.
- Independent Academic

Stage 2

Meeting of the Academic Misconduct Panel

Considers the following:

- Cases of alleged collusion
- Third and subsequent offence of academic malpractice
- Fabrication and Falsification of documents
- Exceptional Cases

For exceptional cases the stage 2 panel meeting will include a viva with the student, normally undertaken by the module tutor who raised concerns. The viva will involve a short question and answer session to establish whether the work is that of the student. Students may be accompanied by a friend; however the friend will not be able to speak on the students' behalf during the viva. All panel members must be present for the viva, ensure it is carried fairly and to hear the nuances of the discussion. Once the viva has finished the tutor should advise the panel as to whether they feel that student has been able to demonstrate that the work is their own.

A Panel will be convened with the following constitution:

- Associate Dean of Higher Education (or nominee) (Chair)
- HE Registrar (or nominee) (Secretary)
- Head of Department
- Independent Academic

9. PENALTIES

Type of Misconduct	Examples of misconduct	Stage	Recommended Penalties
Academic Negligence including cases of AI Negligence	<p>First Academic Negligence offence</p> <p>Plagiarism:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Small in scale and only present in five or fewer occasions throughout the work ➤ Confined to the work of the student and not the work of others ➤ Ignorance: considered to be a lack of understanding of requirements and/or academic writing skills ➤ Carelessness: could be considered as lack of care/forgetfulness with referencing rules ➤ AI cases which show AI at 40% or above 	Informal	<p>Penalty 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Determine that the student may be awarded a mark for the assessment discounting the academic misconduct sections. ➤ The case will be logged against the student's record and a formal warning recorded. ➤ The student will be given advice on how to avoid academic misconduct and given guidance on how and where to access further support to develop the relevant skills ➤ The student will be given guidance on how to use AI ethically and appropriately. <p>This penalty is normally only available for Academic Negligence first offences</p>
Academic Malpractice	<p>Plagiarism</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Second alleged offences which would usually have been classed as Academic Negligence (including second cases of AI). ➤ Self-plagiarism: submitting work that is identical to work that has already been submitted by the student for another assignment and having gained credit for this previously. ➤ Extensive sections of the assignment with poor paraphrasing and/or no attempt at acknowledging sources ➤ Failure to follow instruction in regards to extent and limits in group work 	Stage 1	<p>Penalty 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Determine that the student will need to re-submit the full piece of work having rectified the academic misconduct issues and the work will be capped at the minimum pass mark ➤ The case will be logged against the student's record and an outcome letter sent. ➤ The student will be given advice on how to avoid academic misconduct and will be referred to an academic support staff member/librarian for further guidance and support to develop the relevant skills.
Academic Malpractice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subsequent alleged offences which would usually have been classed as Academic Negligence. • Collusion 	Stage 2	<p>Penalty 2 (first offence of Academic Malpractice)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Determine that the student will need to re-submit the full piece of work having rectified the academic misconduct issues and the work will be capped at the minimum pass mark

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fabrication/Falsification • Research Misconduct • Impersonation • Cheating in Examinations • Unethical behaviour • Theft of Materials • Exceptional cases 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The case will be logged against the student's record and an outcome letter sent. ➤ The student will be given advice on how to avoid academic misconduct and will be referred to an academic support staff member/librarian for further guidance and support to develop the relevant skills. <p>Penalty 3 (2nd offense of Academic Malpractice)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Determine that the student has failed the module. ➤ The student may be allowed to pay and repeat the module in the next academic year <p>Penalty 4 (3rd offense of Academic Malpractice)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Award a mark of zero for the module ➤ Inform the student in writing that there is no resit opportunity and no opportunity to repeat the module ➤ Withdraw the student from the programme of study. Student can retain any credits gained and claim any award available up to that point
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10. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Statistical data relating to the number of academic misconduct cases, including a summary of its decisions, will be included in University Centre Leeds Annual Report.

Owner: HEDO

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Last Review: September 2024

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