

Code of Practice on Academic Misconduct by Students

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1. Introduction

1.1 Overview

1.1.1 Academic integrity is central to the University's core values of: valuing people; working together; integrity; making a difference; and excellence. It is of critical importance that our students fully engage with the concept of studying with integrity so that it is embedded in their own personal and professional development. Academic integrity means presenting academic work with honesty, properly acknowledging sources and the contribution of others, avoiding practice that gives an unfair advantage over others and working within relevant ethical frameworks.

1.1.2 Promotion of academic integrity and the avoidance of academic misconduct are core parts of student induction and training, and require the active participation of staff to ensure that students fully understand acceptable and unacceptable academic practice. Research degree students are required to successfully complete specified online modules on research integrity training prior to their upgrade review. It is strongly recommended that they complete the modules within the first 3 months of starting their research degree.

1.1.3 The University regards academic misconduct as an extremely serious offence, and students should be aware of the severe penalties imposed for academic misconduct.

1.2 Purpose and applicability

1.2.1 This Code of Practice (CoP) is aligned with the University's [Senate Regulations](#) governing plagiarism and academic misconduct (Appendix 1). It is in place to provide more detailed guidance for staff and students about academic integrity, assessment offences and how misconduct will be dealt with.

1.2.2 The CoP is applicable to all examination and summative assessment offences. It relates primarily to taught programmes and includes dissertations and research project reports. It may also be applicable to minor plagiarism offences in research degree theses, although there is a separate [Code of Policy and Procedures for Investigating and Resolving Allegations of Misconduct in Research](#) which applies to research degree students as well as staff. In cases where students on taught programmes are involved in potential research misconduct that does not relate to their assessed work, the Director of Academic and Corporate Governance should be consulted on the procedure to be followed.

2. Types of activities that would constitute academic misconduct

2.1 Definitions and examples

2.1.1 The following list, which is not exhaustive, provides some examples of activities that would be considered as academic misconduct:

- **Attempting to influence improperly an examiner or other member of staff.** This includes offering inducements to staff to mark favourably or alter marks, and threats to staff.
- **Cheating in examinations.** This includes: copying from another student; communicating with another student; the use of unauthorised materials (e.g. crib sheets or equivalent); and the unauthorised use of mobile phones and devices with internet/external connectivity.
- **Collusion.** The representation of a piece of collaborative work as the work of a single candidate, or the representation of draft work that has been shared by another student as the candidate's own work.
- **Commissioning¹.** Submitting an assignment done by another person as the student's own work. This includes paying someone to complete the work.

¹ Also known as contract cheating or ghost writing.

- **Artificial Intelligence Systems.** The unauthorised use of Artificial Intelligence systems, such as Wolfram Alpha and Sudowrite, to complete assessments.
- **Copyright infringement. Uploading any of the University's copyright material to 3rd party.** Please see Appendix 3 for examples as to what this includes.
- **Duplication.** The inclusion in coursework of material identical or substantially similar to material that has already been submitted by the student for any other assessment within the University or at another academic institution.
- **False declaration.** Making a false declaration (e.g. to a Mitigating Circumstances Committee) in order to obtain an unmerited advantage in one or more assessments.
- **Falsification of data.** Presentation of data, based on work purported to have been carried out by the student, which have been invented, altered or embellished.
- **Not following due process.** For example not following ethical committee procedures to gain approval for surveys or experiments.
- **Personation.** Assuming the identity of another person in order to deceive or mislead (e.g. sitting an exam for someone else).
- **Plagiarism.** The unacknowledged use of another's work as if it were one's own. Examples are: the inclusion of more than a single phrase from another's work without the use of quotation marks and acknowledgement of the source; summarising another's work by changing a few words or altering the order of presentation without acknowledgement; copying another's work; and the use of another's ideas without acknowledgement. NB: if you wish to reference your own work, it is important to acknowledge yourself as the source and provide the appropriate reference.

3. Prevention and responsibilities

3.1 Responsibilities and communication

3.1.1 School staff must explain the importance of academic integrity to students as part of the induction process and ensure awareness and understanding of the types of activity that would constitute academic misconduct. Every opportunity should be taken to reinforce the importance of academic integrity throughout the duration of the programme of study. Appropriate guidance must also be published in programme/module handbooks. Training should be provided on how to acknowledge sources appropriately² and, where appropriate, how to present data and the outputs of group work.

3.1.2 The Dundee University Students Association (DUSA), in collaboration with the Centre for Technology and Innovation in Learning (CTIL), has produced a video guide for students available at <https://www.dusa.co.uk/advice/academic/>.

3.1.3 Students should be provided with a link to the [University's Guidance on Proof-Reading of Written Submissions for Assessment](#) which is in place to provide a framework for students, academic staff, academic support staff, and proof-readers for acceptable practice regarding proof-reading of written work by students for summative assessments including dissertations and doctoral theses.

3.1.4 There should also be awareness-raising for students about the University's similarity checking software and how it is used. It is strongly recommended that students are provided with opportunities to test their draft assignments for plagiarism matches with the software used by the University so that they can gain an understanding of acceptable and unacceptable academic practice in a formative way.

² Schools/disciplines must provide students with instructions about the extent to which primary sources are to be used in essays and dissertations; how and when to use references and what form they should take; and the need for full bibliographies and/or lists of sources including those quoted and those which formed part of background reading.

3.1.5 Whilst initial screenings for plagiarism may be conducted by School clerical or administrative staff using the University's similarity checking software, there must not be a formulaic approach to determine whether work has been plagiarised. Academic staff markers must take ultimate responsibility for the identification of similarity matches and for assessing whether similarity matches should be considered as potential plagiarism offences.

3.1.6 Students must be made fully aware and helped to understand that academic misconduct is unacceptable and that severe penalties, including not receiving their intended degree/diploma/certificate, may be applied.

4. Procedures and penalties

4.1 Minor offences

4.1.1 It is recognised that academic misconduct may sometimes be inadvertent and due to lack of experience or different cultural norms. Minor incidences of poor academic practice in particular regarding referencing or quoting the work of others need not necessarily be considered as an academic misconduct offence, and students should be provided with feedback and additional support to gain the necessary skills for academic writing.

4.1.2 In cases where a marker considers that there has been an offence, but that it would be considered as relatively minor with no deliberate attempt to deceive, a mark reduction penalty³ should normally be applied and the student should be provided with feedback, be given a written warning and provided with further guidance about academic integrity. The mark reduction penalty is a matter for academic judgement and the decision should be made by the marker in consultation with the programme or module leader and the Associate Dean (Quality and Academic Standards) or their nominee(s)⁴, who may be designated members of academic staff with responsibility for academic integrity. The penalty will depend on the nature of the offence and would not normally exceed three numeric points on the University's marking scale. The mark reduction penalty should be reported to the Board of Examiners and note of the written warning should be logged on the centrally-held student record managed by Registry. It will not be recorded on the student's transcript. In cases where the academic misconduct is so prevalent that it is felt by the marker (in consultation with the programme or module leader and the Associate Dean (Quality and Academic Standards) or their nominee), that the work cannot be fairly marked for a mark penalty to be applied, this should be treated as a serious offence.

4.1.3 Written warnings should include the following statement: 'This is a formal warning which you must take seriously.' The letter of warning should be written in unambiguous language and must include clear statements about: the specific assignment that the offence related to; the relevant dates; the nature of the offence; the penalty to be applied; how and why the decision was made; and the opportunities provided for support and training about academic integrity for the student.

4.1.4 Second offences following a written warning and any other offences where there is evidence of intent to deceive are considered as serious. Where there are multiple submissions around the same time, and similar failures are found in each, this should be treated as a first offence as the candidate has not had the opportunity to learn from the incident.

4.1.5 In the case of research degree theses an offence could be viewed as minor if there were small, isolated instances of plagiarism that did not impact on the integrity of the work as a whole. The misconduct would be dealt with as part of the *viva voce* exam, with the student forewarned that there

³ For assignments with pass/fail outcomes rather than grading, consideration must be given to whether or not a notional mark reduction would result in a pass or a fail.

⁴ Nominated members of academic staff must have appropriate experience and/or training in dealing with academic misconduct.

is evidence of minor academic misconduct in their thesis so that they can be appropriately prepared to answer their case at the *viva voce* exam. Provided that the members of the examination committee are satisfied that the academic misconduct was minor with no deliberate attempt to deceive, and that otherwise the overall quality of the thesis is satisfactory, candidates may be invited to resubmit a revised thesis. In cases of extensive plagiarism and where it is suspected that there has been a deliberate attempt to deceive, the misconduct would be considered as serious and dealt with under the University's [Code of Policy and Procedures for Investigating and Resolving Allegations of Misconduct in Research](#) (see Section 4.2 below).

4.2 Serious offences

4.2.1 All serious cases of academic misconduct by students on taught programmes must be dealt with by the School Academic Misconduct Panel (explained in Section 4.3). The term 'serious' covers a spectrum of offences ranging from moderate to severe and encompasses all academic misconduct offences that would not be considered as minor (see above). Research misconduct by students on research degree programmes must be dealt with using the University's [Code of Policy and Procedures for Investigating and Resolving Allegations of Misconduct in Research](#).

4.3 Academic Misconduct Panels

4.3.1 The Academic Misconduct Panel (AMP) is a School-level panel which is convened on an *ad hoc* basis to consider all cases where serious academic misconduct is suspected. It acts on behalf of the Board of Examiners to make decisions on whether serious academic misconduct has taken place and, on the penalties, to be applied. The AMP is convened by the School Associate Dean (Quality and Academic Standards) or their nominee and comprises two members of experienced academic staff in addition to the convener. One of the academic staff members should be from outwith the relevant discipline and the membership should be endorsed by the Dean of the School or their nominee. Consideration must be given to the relevant expertise and diversity of the panel as well as potential conflicts of interest. Meetings should be organised and supported by the School office.

4.4 Reporting and investigation

4.4.1 A suspected case of serious academic misconduct must be reported to the School office which will inform the relevant student in writing that a decision has been made to investigate the case and that it will be reviewed by an AMP. The student must be provided with full details of the allegation.

4.4.2 A member of academic staff (who is not part of the AMP and has no conflict of interest) should be nominated by the School Dean or Associate Dean (Quality and Academic Standards or Learning and Teaching) to conduct an investigation. The investigation may involve separate meetings with relevant staff such as tutors, markers or invigilators. There should be a discussion with the student who must be given a full opportunity to present their case. The student may be accompanied by a friend, relative or student representative and they must be informed of their right to be accompanied before any meetings take place. If the student is unavailable to attend a face-to-face meeting, remote communication is acceptable. The investigating member of staff must provide a written report that summarises the outcomes of any such meetings to the School office so that the report can be considered by the AMP. The report should include a brief outline of the case, the evidence, the student's response, any mitigating factors and a note of who was consulted as part of the investigation.

4.4.3 The AMP will be provided with the report from the investigating member of staff and other relevant documented evidence. The Panel may meet with the relevant individuals involved with the case if further clarity is required. The format and approach to meeting with relevant parties should be decided by the AMP.

4.4.4 Where a student disputes an allegation or if there are any mitigating factors, the student must always be invited to attend the meeting of the AMP to state their case. The student must be given the

opportunity to be accompanied by a friend, relative or student representative, and should provide the School office with the name and role of the individual who will accompany them. If the student is unable to attend the meeting, participation through tele- or video-conferencing or presenting their case in writing is acceptable. If the student does not respond to the invitation to the AMP and does not attend, the AMP may reach a conclusion in their absence.

4.4.5 The scale and approach should be proportionate to the complexity and severity of the suspected offence. Minutes of AMP meetings must be taken and retained securely by the School office. Justifications for the decisions that have been taken should be included in the minutes.

4.4.6 Where the AMP decides that a serious academic misconduct offence has taken place and which penalty should be applied, a record of the outcome must be reported to the Board of Examiners. The decision must also be communicated to the student in writing as soon as possible after the AMP meeting.

4.4.7 Schools should ensure that there are mechanisms in place to audit incidences of academic misconduct and the penalties applied to ensure consistency and help avoid any extreme reactions of excessive leniency or draconian punishment. Reports should be provided biannually to the University's Monitoring and Advisory Group on Appeals, Complaints and Discipline Procedures.

4.5 Penalties

4.5.1 The penalties to be applied for academic misconduct will depend on the severity of the offence, the circumstances surrounding the offence and whether the student has been warned previously about academic misconduct. Academic misconduct offences may often be complex and the penalties are a matter of judgement by the AMP. Where the AMP judges that there should be a summative penalty it has the authority to impose the following sanctions:

- a mark reduction for the assessment;
- a mark of zero for the assessment;⁵
- a mark reduction for the module; or
- a mark of zero for the module with the opportunity to re-sit the module with the second attempt being capped at D3.

4.5.2 For exceptionally serious cases of academic misconduct (e.g. commissioning or personation, or where there is a history of repeated offences) where the AMP believes that a higher penalty is required the case will be referred to the University Committee on Academic Misconduct (see Section 5 below).

4.5.3 Examples of the types of penalties that may be applied for different academic misconduct offences are provided in Appendix 2. Note that the table provided in Appendix 2 is not in place to provide a tariff of penalties. It is an illustration of how different incidents might be addressed and of the relative seriousness the University attaches to each type of academic misconduct.

4.6 Appeals

4.6.1 A student may appeal against the decision of the AMP on the following grounds:

- procedural irregularities (including administrative error) that could have resulted in the AMP reaching a different decision;
- new information that was not available to the AMP which could have resulted in the AMP reaching a different decision; or
- prejudice or bias on the part of one or more members of the AMP.

⁵ For modules that have a single element of assessment this would effectively be the same penalty as a mark of zero for the module, with the opportunity to re-sit the module with the second attempt being capped at D3.

4.6.2 Appeals must be made in writing to the Director of Academic and Corporate Governance within 4 weeks of the date on which the student received the decision of the AMP. The Director of Academic and Corporate Governance shall determine whether there are grounds for appeal and inform the student that either:

- there are no grounds for the appeal and the decision of the AMP stands; or
- there are grounds for the appeal and the student's case will be reviewed by the University Committee on Academic Misconduct.

4.6.3 The Committee is empowered to obtain all such information it considers necessary, including the student's academic record and details of the actions already taken. This includes the grounds on which the decision appealed against was reached and the evidence that was available.

4.6.4 After consideration of all the submissions made to it, the Committee may:

- reject the appeal; or
- uphold the appeal and order whatever remedy it deems fair in the circumstances.

4.6.5 The Committee's decision is final with no further right of appeal. It shall be reported to the Dean of the School and may include any recommendations related to the matter which has given rise to the appeal.

5 Exceptionally serious cases of academic misconduct

5.1 Procedure for dealing with exceptionally serious cases of academic misconduct

5.1.1 Where a School AMP considers that an offence is sufficiently serious to deserve a penalty that would result in the student leaving the University with a lesser qualification than that which was intended or have their studies terminated with no qualification awarded, the case must be referred to the Director of Academic and Corporate Governance for consideration by the University Committee on Academic Misconduct. The results of the assessment should be suspended in those cases until that Committee has made a judgement.

5.1.2 Under such circumstances the Convener of the AMP should inform the student concerned in writing that this action has been taken and that the student will be contacted by the Director of Academic and Corporate Governance in due course with information on the procedure to be followed by the University Committee in its investigation.

5.1.3 The University Committee on Academic Misconduct comprises senior members of Senate and the Students' Assessor. The Committee will decide on the appropriate penalty which can include a recommendation to the Senate that the award of a degree or other qualification be refused. It may further recommend the exclusion of a student from the University.

5.2 Appeals

5.2.1 Students may appeal to the Senate against the decisions of the Committee on Academic Misconduct on grounds of:

- procedural irregularities (including administrative error) that could have resulted in the Committee reaching a different decision;
- new information that was not available to the Committee which could have resulted in the Committee reaching a different decision; or
- prejudice or bias on the part of one or more members of the Committee.

5.2.2 Appeals must be made in writing to the University Secretary within 4 weeks of the date on which the student received the decision of the Committee on Academic Misconduct. The University Secretary shall determine whether there are grounds for appeal and inform the student that either:

- there are no grounds for the appeal and the decision of the Committee on Academic Misconduct stands; or
- there are grounds for the appeal and the student's case will be reviewed by the Senate.

5.2.3 The University Secretary will nominate an appeals panel comprising at least two senior members of Senate who were not involved with the case previously. The appeals panel is empowered to obtain all such information that they consider necessary, including the student's academic record and details of the actions already taken. This includes the grounds on which the decision appealed against was reached and the evidence that was available.

5.2.4 After consideration of all the submissions made to it, the appeals panel may:

- reject the appeal; or
- uphold the appeal and order whatever remedy it deems fair in the circumstances.

5.2.5 The appeals panel's decision is final with no further right of appeal. It shall be reported to the Dean of the School and may include any recommendations related to the matter which has given rise to the appeal.

6. Programmes accredited by Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs)

6.1 Dealing with academic misconduct with fitness to practise implications

6.1.1 Certain PSRB-accredited programmes have specific fitness to practise procedures. Where a suspected incidence of academic misconduct has a fitness to practise aspect, Schools must ensure that there is a meaningful connection between the process described in this CoP and their fitness to practise procedures. Schools may choose to run a single procedure based on their fitness to practise model and must be mindful of the impact on the student if the two procedures are conducted separately.

6.2 Reporting academic misconduct incidences to PSRBs

6.2.1 Some professionally accredited programmes do not have separate fitness to practise procedures but are required to inform the professional body about individual academic misconduct offences. The PSRB makes a judgement on the seriousness of the offence and takes action as it sees fit.

Extract from the University of Dundee Senate Regulations

Regulations Governing Plagiarism and Academic Misconduct

1. The University's degrees and other academic awards are granted in recognition of a candidate's personal achievement.
2. Any action on the part of a candidate which involves academic misconduct in work assessed as part of the requirements for an academic award will be regarded as a serious offence.
3. Where a suspected substantive case of academic misconduct is detected by a marker or external examiner the case shall be considered by the School Academic Misconduct Panel which, acting on behalf of the Board of Examiners, may make one of the following decisions:
 - (1) The actions of the candidate do not constitute academic misconduct and no summative penalty will be applied.
 - (2) The nature of the academic misconduct is such that it is appropriate to reduce the candidate's mark for the work in question by a specified amount to reflect the Panel's assessment of the extent of the misconduct. The marks may be adjusted up to the point where the academic rating for the piece of work in question is reduced to zero.
 - (3) The nature of the academic misconduct is such that it is appropriate to reduce the grade of a candidate's whole module by a specified amount to reflect the Panel's assessment of the extent of the misconduct. The grade may be adjusted up to the point where the academic rating for the candidate's whole module is reduced to zero.
 - (4) The nature of the academic misconduct, and/or its extent, is so significant that the Panel is unable to penalise the work adequately by a reduction in marks and that it should be considered as an exceptionally serious case of misconduct to be dealt with by the University Committee on Academic Misconduct.
4. (1) Where a School Academic Misconduct Panel believes the extent of the misconduct to be such that sanction over and above the disallowance of work with an opportunity to retrieve any credit deficit is appropriate, as detailed a report as possible of the circumstances of the offence should be sent to the Director of Academic and Corporate Governance who will arrange for it to be considered, along with a recommendation concerning the subsequent action that might be taken, by the University Committee on Academic Misconduct.
 - (2) In cases where the Committee believes refusal to award a degree or other qualification or exclusion from the University is appropriate the Committee shall make a recommendation to the Senate¹.

¹ Any such decision of the Senatus is subject to the provision of Statute 9(5)(b).

Examples of penalties that might be applied in cases of serious academic misconduct

This table should not be seen as a tariff, but as an illustration of how different incidents might be addressed and of the relative seriousness the University attaches to each type of academic misconduct. Individual circumstances, the degree of contrition shown by the student and the distance through a programme might each lessen or strengthen the case for any individual sanction.

Type of offence	Example of the penalty that may be applied ¹
Attempting to influence improperly an examiner or other member of staff	Penalties can range from a mark of zero for the assignment to termination of studies depending on the circumstances.
Cheating (or attempted cheating) in an examination	A mark of zero for the examination. The AMP may take into account the extent to which a student was able to benefit from an attempt at cheating, particularly for a first offence. In any event, students should be permitted to complete the examination.
Collusion	A mark of zero for the assignment.
Artificial Intelligence System	A mark of zero for the assignment.
Commissioning/contract cheating	Termination of studies.
Copyright Infringement	As this is a legal matter it will be considered under the University of Dundee Student Discipline Procedure.
Duplication	A mark reduction or a mark of zero depending on the extent of the duplication.
False declaration	Penalties can range from a mark of zero for the assignment to termination of studies depending on the circumstances.
Falsification of data	Penalties can range from a mark of zero for the assignment to termination of studies depending on the circumstances.
Not following due process e.g. ethical procedure not followed	Penalties can range from a mark of zero for the assignment to termination of studies depending on the circumstances.
Personation	Termination of studies.

¹ Where a student commits an offence having had a previous warning the penalty will be more severe than if it was a first offence.

Plagiarism	<p>Minor plagiarism offences (taught programmes) may incur a penalty of a mark reduction, with a warning issued and steps taken to provide the student with additional support to gain the necessary skills for academic writing.</p> <p>Serious plagiarism offences (taught programmes) may incur a penalty of a zero grade for the assignment or the whole module.</p>
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Examples of Teaching Resources that are Copyright

- Learning and Teaching Materials
 - Module plans and timetables
 - Module handbooks
 - Learning objectives and knowledge/skill attainment targets
 - Instructional slides (such as PPT) and associated notes
 - Video/audio recordings of live teaching (also known as lecture capture)
 - Video/audio recordings of lecture presentations for subsequent release
 - Video/audio recordings of instructional content including laboratories
 - Educational videos
 - Resource (reading) lists
 - Internet links and references
 - Laboratory handbooks
 - Lecture handouts
 - Authored guides or instructional papers
 - Instructional software
 - Educational apps for phone platforms
 - Tutorial sets of resources
 - Individual assignment, assessment questions and marking schedules
 - Banks of assessment questions, answers and exercises
 - Evaluation and survey questions and responses
 - Other similar and related educational materials
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