Guidance to Schools Regarding Academic Misconduct

Our approach to managing misconduct in amongst the challenges of Covid-19.

Following discussion at the Onshore/Student subgroup the guidance set out below has been prepared to support Schools to manage cases of Academic Misconduct during the current exceptional circumstances and our transition to new ways of working. It should be noted that the Code of Practice remains in place at this time and has not been changed. This guidance is intended to support the reasonable application of the Code during the period of impact of Covid-19.

Schools are encouraged to remind students that they should still be aware of their responsibilities in relation to academic integrity and conduct, and that whilst we are moving to different ways of working we will still be monitoring submissions for all forms of academic misconduct and taking action where it is identified.

However, within that context we are also mindful that students are going through a significant transition themselves and may be working in ways that they have not before, and we want to take an empathetic approach to dealing with cases that are identified.

For the purposes of this guidance we are distinguishing between minor (section 4.1 of the Code) and first-time misconduct and repeated or serious misconduct.

The following is therefore proposed:

1. Schools include in their messaging appropriate reminders to students of the regulations and their obligations. The Academic Skills Centre has a range of resources, and in particular guides on referencing and plagiarism [http://libguides.dundee.ac.uk/learnsmart](http://libguides.dundee.ac.uk/learnsmart). The DUSA academic misconduct video may be helpful: [https://www.dusa.co.uk/blog/what-is-academic-misconduct/](https://www.dusa.co.uk/blog/what-is-academic-misconduct/)

Minor/First Time

2. The Associate Dean for Quality & Academic Standards may wish to delegate responsibility for these cases to someone within the relevant programme team, such as a Programme Director/Leader, who will be empowered to act in these cases.

3. The Associate Dean or delegate is responsible for ensuring appropriate coordination to ensure that they are aware of any prior cases involving the student(s) and to report actions taken to prevent a student from being considered first time on multiple occasions. It is for the School to confirm existing arrangements or to identify appropriate mechanisms for this to occur.

4. During the current assessment period only, collusion and cheating in exams will be subject to the process AS IF THEY were ‘minor incidences of poor academic practice’ (4.1 of the Code) on the first occurrence and will therefore be subject to the process for minor offences, but they remain, nonetheless, serious offences.

5. The Associate Dean or delegate will contact the student(s) involved (Schools to prepare relevant templates to suit circumstances) to make them aware that academic misconduct has been identified and provide guidance appropriate to the circumstances e.g. collusion,
plagiarism, data misuse and that a penalty of a reduction by one grade point will be applied to their result\(^1\). (right of appeal notwithstanding)

**Repeated or Serious Misconduct**

6. Where a case of repeated or serious misconduct is identified this should be investigated in the usual way, albeit virtually.

7. The Academic Misconduct Panel (Section 4.3) should meet remotely ideally by video conference or if that is not possible by telephone. This will include engagement by a classmate/DUSA rep if the student wishes to be accompanied.

8. As per existing guidance the AMP should be convened by the Assoc. Dean for Quality and Academic Standards or their nominee.

9. As is usual practice where a student does not engage with the process the AMP may continue to consider the case in the student’s absence. Should a delay be caused by ill-health, and is short this should be accommodated where possible. If this can not be accommodated or the delay is deemed so long as to potentially delay a student’s progression or award, the Panel may continue to meet without the student being present. The student will continue to have the right of appeal. Any resultant change to a classification would be enacted in the normal way if ill-health had caused a serious delay.

**Confirmed by Covid-19 On-Shore Sub-Group 27/3/20**

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\(^1\) During this period a penalty of one grade point will normally be applied for minor/first time cases. Where a delegate feels an alternative penalty should be applied for a minor/first time case this should be discussed with the Assoc. Dean for Quality & Academic Standards in the first instance.