

HIGHER EDUCATION

ACADEMIC IRREGULARITIES POLICY

ACADEMIC YEAR 2018-19

DOCUMENT CONTROL

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DOCUMENT APPROVAL

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Higher Education Policy on Academic Irregularities 2018-19

1. Introduction

It is clearly in the interests of former, current and future students that the College maintains the good reputation of its awards to promote high standards of academic honesty and integrity.

2. Academic irregularities

These are any attempt by a student to gain unfair advantage for herself/himself, or another student, by unauthorised means. The following are examples of academic irregularities:

2.1 Malpractice

This includes:

- communicating with, or copying from, any other candidate during an examination except insofar as the examination regulations may specifically permit this, for example, group assessments
- communicating during an examination with any person other than a properly authorised invigilator or another authorised member of staff
- introducing any written or printed materials into the examination room unless expressly permitted by the examination board or course regulations
- introducing any electronically stored information into the examination room, unless expressly permitted by the examination board or course regulations
- gaining access to any unauthorised material relating to an examination before or during the examination
- obtaining a copy of an unseen written examination paper in advance of the date and time of its authorised release
- any other ways, the provision, or assistance in the provision, of false evidence of knowledge or understanding in examinations

NB. In this context the term *examinations* is deemed to include end tests, phase tests, or other tests carried out under examination conditions.

2.2 Collusion

This includes a situation where a student:

- undertakes work in collaboration with another person, but submits that work as entirely their own with the intention of gaining unfair advantage
- collaborates with another candidate in the completion of work which is intended to be submitted as that other candidate's own unaided work
- knowingly permits another candidate to copy all or part of their own work, and to submit it as that other candidate's own unaided work

NB. The College encourages all students to share ideas and exchange reference material prior to each student writing up their own personal presentation of an assessed piece of work.

Some course teams may stipulate an assessment as assessed group work. Where this is undertaken, course teams will indicate the criteria and manner in which the work is assessed and the ways in which individual marks are ascribed to members of the group.

2.3 Falsifying data

The presentation of data in laboratory reports, projects, etc., based on experimental work falsely purported to have been carried out by the candidate, fabricated by the candidate or

obtained by unfair means.

2.4 Personation

Personation is the legal term for what is usually referred to as impersonation. Personation is the assumption by one person of the identity of another person with intent to deceive, or to gain unfair advantage. It may exist where:

- one person assumes the identity of a candidate, with the intention of gaining unfair advantage for that candidate
- the candidate is knowingly and willingly impersonated by another with the intention of gaining unfair advantage for the person personated

2.5 Plagiarism

The deliberate, substantial and unacknowledged incorporation in a candidate's work of material derived from the work (published or unpublished) of another. Examples of plagiarism are:

- the inclusion in a candidate's work of more than a single phrase from another person's work without the use of quotation marks and acknowledgement of the sources
- the summarising of another person's work by simply changing words or altering the order of presentation, without acknowledgements
- copying the work of another candidate, with or without that candidate's knowledge or agreement. In the former case both parties are guilty of academic irregularity
- material cut and pasted from the internet or other electronic sources without acknowledgement of the source
- copying or using a substantial amount of the student's own work

2.6 Mobile phones

Having a mobile telephone turned on and/or visible in an examination, time-constrained assignment or phase test is an academic offence.

2.7 Dishonest practice

The use of any form of dishonest practice not identified by the above definitions.

3. Incontrovertible evidence

Where there is incontrovertible evidence that academic misconduct has occurred, the examination board will determine the outcome. Unless the incident occurs in close proximity to an examination board the Chair may determine the outcome and arrange for it to be ratified by the board.

4. Procedure for dealing with academic misconduct

An important criterion in deciding how to deal with an instance of academic misconduct is whether or not the student intended to deceive. Secondly, the seriousness or extent to which misconduct has occurred.

Therefore the following process will be adopted according to the seriousness of the occurrence:

4.1 Minor cases of academic misconduct

Where a lecturer considers that the suspected instance of academic misconduct is minor and where it is the first instance during a student's course, the matter will be dealt with by the lecturer and personal tutor, by providing help and guidance and issuing an informal warning

about the future conduct and by completing the [Minor Academic Misconduct Form](#)

Examples of minor instances of academic misconduct might include:

- failure to reference work properly
- failure to acknowledge the source of a small section of an assignment
- receiving undue help in good faith, such as a misunderstanding over instruction

4.2 Serious cases of academic misconduct

Where a lecturer suspects a more serious instance of academic misconduct or where there have been previous minor occurrences, a [Major Academic Conduct Misconduct Form](#) and report will be made to the Head of Faculty who may institute the formal College disciplinary procedure at the appropriate stage.

Possible outcomes:

- (a) The Head of Faculty will decide that no academic misconduct has taken place and the assessment will be marked as it stands.
- (b) The student will accept that academic misconduct has occurred and will be allowed to resubmit the assessment.

A student who has committed an academic irregularity may be referred in a unit/module or element in order to provide an opportunity to meet the learning outcomes. If the resubmitted work meets the criteria for a pass grade, a pass will be recorded. In the case of misconduct relating to an examination, the student will fail that sitting but will be allowed to resit at a later date.

The unit/module is not compensated and the unit/module aggregate mark remains zero. The student will receive a formal written warning, which will be noted on the student's record.

Should the student repeat the offence it will be treated as gross misconduct and it will be dealt with under the terms of the College disciplinary procedure.

- (c) The Head of Faculty decides that academic misconduct has occurred but the student will not accept the decision.

In this case the Director of Quality or their representative will convene an academic misconduct appeals panel. If appropriate, a subject specialist may be co-opted onto the academic misconduct appeals panel.

The academic misconduct appeals panel will have the right to examine written evidence and interview the student and lecturer concerned. A written record of the meeting(s) and decision will be maintained.

If necessary, representatives of the awarding body/validating university and, where appropriate regulating bodies will be informed. The written records of the academic misconduct appeals panel will be confidential.

The outcome of the appeal may be:

- previous decisions are confirmed
- previous decisions are overturned and the reasons given in writing.

The Chair of the academic misconduct appeals panel will issue its decision within ten working days of the meeting of the academic misconduct panel.

5. Referral to Validating University or Awarding Body

(a) Courses awarded by a Validating University

For students on university validated courses the Chair of the academic misconduct appeals panel will issue a Decision Letter within ten working days of its meeting. This will detail the process students may take to refer the issue to the validating university if they still remain dissatisfied with the outcome of the appeal. The validating university will issue a Completion of Procedures letter detailing their decision and any further recourse the student may have to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator if still not satisfied with the outcome of the appeal.

(b) Courses awarded by Pearson

Students on Higher National Certificate/Higher National Diploma courses awarded by Pearson will receive a Completion of Procedures Letter from the Chair of the appeals panel detailing the process students may take to refer the issue direct to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator if they still remain dissatisfied with the outcome of the appeal.

Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education

There is an expectation from partner universities and awarding bodies that academic misconduct appeals are dealt with by the College in the first instance. If the student feels that the matter has not been satisfactorily resolved it may be pursued through the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA) provided that the appeal is eligible under its rules. The OIA has been established to provide an independent scheme for the review of student appeals and can be contacted at www.oiahe.org.uk. An appeal will not be considered by the OIA unless it is received within 12 months from the date of issue of the Completion of Procedures Letter.