

Section Two (A) ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

Policy

1. It is University policy that the values of academic integrity are promoted and that academic misconduct is prevented through educating students in appropriate academic conduct. Academic integrity represents a set of values which operate as the foundation of academic practice. These values include honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility.
2. All instances of plagiarism, collusion, personation, fabrication of results, exam misconduct or a breach of research ethics are serious failures to respect the integrity and fairness of the assessment process.
3. As such, all cases¹ of academic misconduct in module assessment must be seriously considered and appropriate penalties applied, as determined by the Academic Misconduct Panel. A First Case of collusion/plagiarism will not be penalised, provided a previous occurrence of academic misconduct has not taken place. Instead, the student will be given feedback and referred to an Academic Practice Workshop, provided that the student is not at the end of their course.
4. Module assessment includes any work undertaken by a student for which marks contributing to a module are awarded, including those modules which are marked pass/fail.

Types of academic misconduct

Collusion

5. Collusion is the preparation or production of work for assessment jointly with another person or persons unless explicitly permitted by the assessment. An act of collusion is understood to encompass those who actively assist others or allow others to access their work prior to submission for assessment. In addition, any student is guilty of collusion if they access and copy any part of the work of another to derive benefit irrespective of whether permission was given. Where joint preparation is permitted by the assessment task but joint production is not, the submitted work must

directly acknowledged. For cases where work has been re-used see **Overlapping material Marking, Moderation and Feedback Regulations**'.

Personation

7. **Personation in written submissions** is where someone or software (unless explicitly permitted in the assessment guidance from the module convenor) other than the student prepares the work, part of the work, or provides substantial assistance

12. The University takes misconduct in examination extremely seriously and any concerns raised will result in an investigation of potential major academic misconduct.

Fabrication

13. Fabrication of results or sources is where the results of an experiment, focus group or other research activity have been made up. It also includes observations in practical or project work, such as not accurately recording the outcome of a lab experiment that did not go as planned.

Breach of research ethics

14. Breach of research ethics includes failure to gain ethical approval; carrying out research without appropriate permission; breach of confidentiality or improper handling of privileged or private information on individuals gathered during data collection; coercion or bribery of project participants. Students conducting research with human participants, personal data (including that collected from social media and other sources), non-human animal subjects or research that may have a detrimental impact on the environment, must gain ethical approval before carrying out the research, this includes before contacting potential participants and/or advertising the study. Students are responsible for 4[-)]Alng outh6um ouespiecord(en)14(t6()6(4(i)5(set)-4()-4(g)13

in an assessment. Students should retain research data that underpins dissertations or projects until after graduation.

18. Schools must agree and provide students with information on discipline specific referencing norms at the start of their studies. These norms must be notified to students at induction, through course/module handbooks, module teaching sessions and assessment briefings, as appropriate. Markers must ensure that discipline specific referencing norms have been adhered to.
19. All sources of information used in preparing the work being submitted must be fully acknowledged, in an approved format. This includes acknowledging all written and electronic sources. Where work is produced in an examination on campus it will be sufficient to acknowledge the source without providing a full reference.
20. Students must not take notes or other unauthorised materials/devices into an examination, unless the instructions explicitly state that this is allowed.
21. Unless explicitly allowed in the module documentation or specified in the assessment task, students must work alone on preparing their assessment and must not share their work with other students until both students have submitted and the late submission deadline has passed.
22. The development of academic skills is an important part of student learning. It is recognised that students new to UK higher education may be inexperienced, and may need time to develop good academic referencing skills. For this reason, first year undergraduate students and those new to UK higher education are strongly recommended to refer to the following University web pages:
<http://www.sussex.ac.uk/skillshub/index.php?id=251>
23. Schools should develop assessments that minimise the potential for academic misconduct.

Identifying Academic Misconduct

24. The University assessment procedures are designed to enable the identification of plagiarism, personation and collusion, and the University may make use of electronic means in reviewing student work. Where there is evidence indicating that there may be a case of collusion, plagiarism, personation, misconduct in an exam taken remotely, fabrication of results, or a breach of research ethics, the assessment is referred to the School Investigating Officer who will initiate an investigation.

Investigating Officer

25. An Investigating Officer is appointed for each School to investigate cases on modules owned by the School. The role of the Investigating Officer is to make a preliminary determination of major or minor based on the extent of the academic misconduct set out in the evidence file provided by the Module Convenor. The Investigating Officer should ensure that cases of overlapping material are not processed as plagiarism cases and that the regulations regarding **Overlapping material** set out in the regulations on **Marking, Moderation and Feedback** are applied instead.

Investigating Officers may also act as Panel members in cases where they have not determined the *prima facie* case. Where Investigating Officers believe misconduct has occurred in work done by students they have taught or by students that they are the Academic Advisor for, they will pass the case to the Investigating Officer of another School. A role descriptor for the Investigating Officer is provided at: <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/adqe/standards/academicmisconduct/integrity>

Levels of Misconduct

26.

Determination of minor and major cases of misconduct

27. The Investigating Officer should bear in mind the following when making a preliminary determination of a misconduct case as either major or minor:

(i) the assessment *impact* is not a relevant issue. For example, cheating will not be ignored just because the work in question is not heavily weighted for the module mark, or the module itself is not a significantly weighted module within the course. Stage of study is not germane to the decision;

Major misconduct

31. Major misconduct cases usually include instances where a significant proportion of assessed work is found to be plagiarised, where there is substantial collusion or fabrication of results or abuse of any examination protocols, or where there is evidence of repeated minor misconduct.
32. Cases of pre-meditated intention will usually be major cases. For example, personation where a student submits work described as their own but which has been produced on their behalf by another person, or software (unless explicitly permitted in the assessment guidance from the module convenor) including where someone has been commissioned to write an essay for them, or where the student undertakes to solicit or prepare an assessment on behalf of someone else.
33. Where the Investigating Officer is unable to make a preliminary determination on whether a case is major or minor misconduct based on the evidence, they should make this clear to the Panel.

No case

34. If the Investigating Officer believes that the evidence presented does not constitute a *prima facie* case, they will return the material to the Marker with a request for more information. If this is not forthcoming, the Investigating Officer will not proceed with the case. In a case of minor collusion/plagiarism the mark should be reviewed as it will have been marked taking the suspected collusions/plagiarism into consideration.

Procedures for determining allegations of misconduct

35. Where a concern has been raised regarding misconduct in the preparation and/or presentation of an assessment, the Marker, under the oversight of the Module Convenor, should take appropriate steps to identify all instances of misconduct in the assessment exercise and highlight these for easy reference. Where a registered doctoral student is involved in the marking process, the Module Convenor should undertake this work to avoid a situation where a student would be reviewed by another student.
36. In all cases the Module Convenor will be responsible for ensuring that the Investigating Officer receives appropriate assistance in undertaking the preliminary determination in relation to reviewing the submitted assessment. This will enable the Module Convenor to reflect on the cases raised and review the assessment task for the following cohort to secure academic standards.

Investigating Officer and Academic Misconduct Panel in their review of the material presented. No mark will be recorded on the system. Where a case of collusion involves a student in a higher level of study, both students must normally be invited to the Panel (or First Case meeting) to help establish how the collusion occurred.

used, provided the student does not have any previous instances of misconduct.

47. Where collusion or plagiarism is identified in work submitted for assessment, and the Investigating Officer confirms that no previous case of academic misconduct has been logged on the student's record, the student will be given feedback by the Module Convenor and referred to the online Academic Practice Workshop (APW). Referral to the APW will apply whether the case is determined to be minor or major. For a First Case (minor or major), the following applies:

For plagiarism: a mark will be given based only on the sections believed to be the

For collusion: a mark will be given based only on work that is not the same as another student's.

No further penalty is applied.

The First Case procedure may be used where multiple cases of plagiarism/collusion occurred at the same time, for example, in the same assessment period. This is the only circumstance within which cases may be considered as concurrent.

48. The evidence file will be forwarded to the School Investigating Officer who will determine whether the case is minor or major. First Cases will not normally be considered by the Panel.
49. The Module Convenor (or nominee) will be responsible for arranging to see the student to explain why the work is problematic, and will refer the student to the online Academic Practice Workshop. The student should be seen within 10 working days of the marks being published. For a First Case of collusion/plagiarism (minor/major) the Module Convenor will tell the student the proportion of the work judged to be subject to collusion/plagiarism, and explain that marks are not given for the sections of work that are the same as another student's (for collusion) or sections of work not judged to be the student's own (for plagiarism).
50. The student may decide to challenge the allegation, providing the Progression and Award Board (PAB) has not already considered the student. Challenging the allegation of collusion or plagiarism involves electing to go to an Academic Misconduct Panel, where a penalty may be applied. For a case of collusion, this will result in all the students involved being referred to the Panel. However, not all the students involved will necessarily receive a penalty from the Panel. (Where the PAB has already considered the student, an appeal may be made against the PAB decision, where the criteria are met.)
51. The collusion or plagiarism incident will not be recorded against the student's assessment record as a misconduct case. Enrolment on and satisfactory completion of the online Academic Practice Workshop will be recorded by the University. This record will be checked in all cases where a further concern of collusion /plagiarism is raised.

where it is a First Case for one or more of the students. The First Case of collusion/plagiarism procedure cannot be used where a previous case of another type of misconduct has occurred. In these circumstances, the case will be considered by the Panel and the student may be referred to an Academic Practice Workshop.

Procedure for consideration of misconduct in examination

54. Any instance of misconduct in an examination held on campus or remotely will be considered as major misconduct. For exams held on campus, students must place

58. Students are entitled (but not required) to attend a Panel meeting and are encouraged to submit a written statement. The student must notify the Misconduct Panel Secretary at least 48 hours in advance of the Panel meeting whether they will attend and who, if anyone, will accompany them. The evidence file will be made available on request for the student and their representative to review prior to the Panel meeting
Panel meetings may proceed in the absence of the student, unless the Panel Chair
59. An annual workshop will take place for Chairs of Academic Misconduct Panels to review any issues that arose at the Panel in the academic year.
60. Panel members are required to familiarise themselves with the evidence before the Panel meeting. The Panel discussion must be based on evidence provided and not rely solely on the presentation of the case on the day of the Panel meeting.

Procedure for cases of personation to be considered

61. A suspected case of personation may be investigated by a School team, based on a paper based review of the students other written assessments (submissions and exams) to date in the stage of study. The School team should normally include the Head of School, the Course Convenor and must include the Investigating Officer. The School team would review the assessments and consider issues such as consistency
performance in assessment. The School team may refer a case for consideration by
is referred to the Panel, the student
will be invited to attend the Panel to discuss the findings of the School team and to provide information on how the assessment was completed. An oral exam (viva voce)

at the Panel, however, questions can be asked about how the assessment was prepared and why material was included or not (d)8(p)5ecod(6)4(nve)31(st)-4(u)5(ga)3(t)-4(i)5(ng)3

- (iii) To use academic judgement to apply appropriate penalties, in accordance with the regulations, to ensure that the academic standards of the award are maintained.
- (iv) To report annually to the University Education Committee.
- (v) The Panel will meet as required.

Composition and Quoracy

- (vi) Membership of the Academic Misconduct Panel will include a Chair, and approved members who may include Minimum membership for quoracy shall be the Chair and at least two members. Members of the Academic Misconduct Panel are appointed by the University Education Committee for a period of three years.

64. Role descriptors for the misconduct panel Chair and member are provided at:
<http://www.sussex.ac.uk/adge/standards/academicmisconduct/integrity>

Conduct of the Panel meeting

The Panel meeting will be conducted as follows:

- 65. The Chair will explain to the student the meeting procedure. It will be made clear that the stage of determining whether misconduct had occurred or not, and will reach a decision on that point on the basis of the facts presented. Exceptional Circumstances may not be taken into consideration.
- 66. The Chair will state the concerns raised, including the relevant definitions of academic misconduct, and will then ask the student whether they accept or reject that misconduct had occurred.

Admission of misconduct

- 67. If the student accepts that misconduct occurred, the meeting will be concerned with assessing the gravity of the actions and considering the circumstances. The Presenter will be invited to assess the extent of the misconduct. The student will be invited to respond with the help of their representative.

Denial of misconduct

- 68. If the student denies that misconduct occurred, the meeting will first be concerned with establishing whether misconduct took place. The Presenter will set out the concerns raised. The student may then respond to the concerns with the help of their representative. Members of the Panel may intervene from time to time to raise a question.
- 69. Where the Chair of a Panel considers it to be beneficial in resolving a case (either in advance of a meeting or during a meeting), the Chair may invite an academic from the relevant department (but not the person responsible for marking the work). The the work in question, knowledge of the methods used to produce the work, and knowledge of the sources (cited or otherwise) informing the work. The questioning will not assess the

82. Loss of credit cannot be readdressed by granting condoned credit where a fail is the result of applying the misconduct penalty. However, a resit opportunity may be given by the PAB where the module has been failed.
83. The Panel may refer any cases to the Student Discipline Committee for consideration in addition to conducting the academic misconduct procedure.

Progression and Award Boards (PABs)

84. PABs will not proceed to confirm progress or determine classification whilst an allegation of academic misconduct is outstanding in relation to a student. However, candidates must be considered to enable any resits/sits to be offered on other modules with the candidate reconsidered by a virtual PAB, if necessary, once the outcome of the misconduct process is known.

Appeals

85. Students have the right of appeal against academic misconduct decisions, where the criteria are met. Please refer to the appeals criteria available at:
<https://student.sussex.ac.uk/complaints/appeals/types-of-appeal#misconduct>