

# **Academic Principles and Regulations**

## **Section C9: Academic Integrity**

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## **SECTION C9: ACADEMIC INTEGRITY REGULATIONS**

### **C9.1 INTRODUCTION**

The University operates an Academic Integrity Board to consider admitted or found cases of unfair practice across the institution for all taught awards. The Research Degrees Sub-committee considers all admitted or found cases of unfair practice for research awards. Prior to consideration of admitted or found cases, investigation takes place at Faculty or Partner level through Investigatory Interview and Assessment Enquiry Panel, as appropriate.

Provisions of these regulations (C9) apply to Boards of Examiners for taught awards including those delivered in collaboration or partnership and the Research Degrees sub-committee for research awards.

#### **C9.1.1 Assessment**

For the purpose of these Regulations, assessment includes the following forms of assessment:

- Coursework
- Examinations
- Other Forms of Assessment (e.g. thesis, presentation).

#### **C9.1.2 Coursework**

Coursework is individual or group work presented for marking, the results of which contribute to a student's formal assessment for progression or for an award.

Such coursework **may** include:

- written or other documented material e.g. essays, reports, projects
- dissertations, theses
- visual, three dimensional, audio and audio-visual material
- practical or task-orientated activities and their outcomes
- mixed-mode presentations
- material stored electronically
- such other individual or group learning as is appropriate for the Scheme, Course or an individual programme of study.

#### **C9.1.3 Examinations**

An examination is a formal, timed, written question paper answered individually by each candidate, normally in writing, on a specific day at a specified time and place.

Such an assessment may be:

- a written examination
- an end of unit assessment
- a phase test
- such other form of assessment as is applicable to the Scheme, Course or individual programme of study.

#### **C9.1.4 Other Forms of Assessment**

Other forms of assessment are such other means of assessment as may be incorporated in a course, module or research award.

## **C9.2 DEFINITIONS**

Any attempt to gain an unfair advantage, **whether intentional or unintentional**, is a matter of academic judgement and may be considered an offence under these regulations.

Examples of unfair practice are provided below:

### **C9.2.1 Cheating**

Cheating is unfair behaviour relating to an examination. It includes:

- a) Actions within the examination room
  - communicating with any other candidate during an examination
  - copying from any other candidate during an examination
  - communicating with any other person other than an authorised invigilator or another member of staff during an examination
  - possession of any written or printed materials in the examination room unless expressly permitted by the examination regulations
  - possession of any electronically stored information in the examination room unless expressly permitted by the examination regulations
  - use of a mobile phone or other electronic device during an examination, unless expressly permitted by the examination regulations
- b) Actions outside of the examination room
  - gaining access to any unauthorised material relating to the examination during or before the examination
  - obtaining a copy of a written examination paper in advance of the time and date for its authorised release.

### **C9.2.2 Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is the substantial, unacknowledged, incorporation in a student's work of material derived from the work (published or unpublished) of another. "Work" includes, but is not limited to, materials in all formats and sources including print, electronic, online, audio visual etc.

Examples of plagiarism include:

- the inclusion in a student's work of substantial extracts from another person's work without the use of quotation marks
- the substantial summarising of another person's work without acknowledgement
- the substantial and unauthorised use of the ideas of another person without acknowledgement

### **C9.2.3 Self-Plagiarism**

Self-plagiarism occurs when a student submits work which has been submitted elsewhere. This may be part of a piece of work or the entire piece of work. It may have been submitted to this University or another institution and may or may not have been awarded credit.

### **C9.2.4 Collusion**

Collusion occurs when a student collaborates with another student in the completion of work which is then submitted as unaided work by either student.

### **C9.2.5 Other Forms of Unfair Practice**

Other forms of Unfair Practice include, but are not limited to:

- offering a bribe or inducement to any member of staff of the University, or any external invigilator or examiner, who is connected with the student's assessments
- falsifying data in any piece of work

- the assumption by one person of the identity of another person with the intent to deceive or gain unfair advantage
- submitting copies of another person's work stored on an electronic device
- ghostwriting, i.e. soliciting a third party to do some or all of a piece of work (paid or unpaid)
- non-compliance with university research ethics procedures
- failure to gain ethical approval for the submitted piece of work, as appropriate.

### **C9.3 GENERAL PROVISIONS**

#### **C9.3.1 Authority to Determine Penalty**

The Academic Integrity Board is the only body which has the right to determine penalty in respect of found or admitted instances of unfair practice for taught awards. The Research Degrees Sub-committee is the only body which has the right to determine penalty in respect of found or admitted instances of unfair practice for research awards. Any penalty shall be in accordance with those specified in Section C9.7 of these regulations.

#### **C9.3.2 Determination of whether an offence has occurred**

The determination of whether an offence has occurred is not a matter for the Academic Integrity Board or Research Degrees Sub-committee. Such determination is made through an Investigatory Interview, or by an Assessment Enquiry Panel.

#### **C9.3.3 Right of Appeal**

A student has the right to appeal a decision of the Board of Examiners, Examination Committee or Research Degrees Sub-committee, where the application of decision is manifest. Grounds on which the appeal is made must be included in the notification of appeal. A simple request for a re-hearing does not constitute valid grounds for appeal. See section C16 of these regulations.

#### **C9.3.4 Standard of Proof**

The standard of proof required by an Assessment Enquiry Panel is that of "the balance of probabilities".

#### **C9.3.5 Reports to the Academic Integrity Board or Research Degrees Sub-committee**

A report will be made to the Chair of the Academic Integrity Board or Chair of the Research Degrees Sub-committee for the purpose of determining penalty where an allegation has been **admitted** or **found**. This report is the basis upon which the Academic Integrity Board or Research Degrees Sub-committee can be satisfied that, on the balance of probabilities, an offence has taken place, and can proceed to consider subsequent action.

#### **C9.3.6 Remit of the Academic Integrity Board and Research Degrees Sub-committee**

The role of the Academic Integrity Board and Research Degrees Sub-committee is to consider the individual case or cases, and to exercise its discretion and authority accordingly, and in accordance with these regulations.

#### **C9.3.7 Consideration of Individual Cases**

Each case will be considered on its own merits, and on the basis of:

- the gravity of the case
- the circumstances of the case
- the level at which the offence took place
- whether the offence was a repeat offence

#### **C9.3.8 Record of Offences**

A record of all admitted or found offences will remain on the student's file for the duration of their study in the University.

### **C9.3.9 Other University Procedures**

From the time when action is taken by a member of staff that an investigation is taking place into a possible offence under these regulations, the student may not invoke the Student Complaints Procedure on any matter directly related to these investigations or proceedings. Complaints may only be raised on the conclusion of the procedures established for the consideration of allegations of unfair practice i.e. Investigatory Interview and Assessment Enquiry Panel as relevant.

## **C9.4 SUSPECTED CASES**

### **C9.4.1 Making an allegation**

An allegation of suspected unfair practice may be presented by a member of staff of our university or of a collaborative partner.

Taught awards may be investigated following submission of assessment or examination.

Research awards may be investigated prior to or following submission for examination.

Investigation of a suspected offence may consider previously awarded modules, if there is cause to do so.

### **C9.4.2 Right to Accompaniment or Representation**

At any stage of these procedures a student will have the right to:

- be accompanied by a friend (provided that the friend is not a professionally contracted advocate);
- be accompanied or represented by a Student Union representative. (This right of accompaniment and representation is a general right and is not the right to accompaniment and/or representation by a specific individual.)

### **C9.4.3 Stage 1 – Investigatory Interview**

#### **C9.4.3.1 Written Information to the Student**

A student will be given the following information in writing, at least 5 working days in advance of a request to attend an Investigatory Interview:

- the reason for their attendance being required
- a copy of any relevant report or other evidence
- the right to seek advice from the Students' Union
- the right to accompaniment/ representation (as above).

#### **C9.4.3.2 Purpose of the Investigatory Interview**

The purpose of the investigatory interview is to establish whether unfair practice has occurred.

#### **C9.4.3.3 Investigatory Interview Membership**

The membership of the investigatory interview will consist of:

- Chair (Faculty/Partner Academic Integrity Co-ordinator)
- Internal Examiner (the person identifying the alleged offence)
- Director of Studies (Research only)

The student and their friend and/or representative will also be in attendance. (see C9.4.2 above)

#### **C9.4.3.4 Responsibilities of Student(s)**

It is the student(s) responsibility to:

- co-operate with the regulations concerning the alleged offence
- seek independent advice, if required (see C9.4.2)
- attend the Investigatory Interview
- demonstrate that the work is their own or that the alleged offence has not occurred

#### **C9.4.3.5 Outcomes of the Investigatory Interview**

The possible outcomes of the investigatory interview are:

- an offence has been admitted
- no offence has occurred
- the matter is unresolved and is referred to an Assessment Enquiry Panel

#### **C9.4.3.6 Action following Investigatory Interview**

Upon conclusion of an investigatory interview the following action may be taken:

- a) An offence has been admitted:  
The offence will be reported to the Academic Integrity Board or Research Degrees Sub-committee to determine penalty.
- b) No offence has occurred:  
In the event of a finding that no offence has occurred the following apply:
  - the matter shall be considered to be concluded
  - no report of it shall be made to the Academic Integrity Board or Research Degrees Sub-committee
  - no report of it shall be made within the University
  - the student will be considered in the usual way and the matter will not be raised in the proceedings of the Board of Examiners or Examination Committee.
  - any member of the Board or Committee who has been party to the allegation or the investigation shall totally disregard the original allegations.
- c) The matter is unresolved and referred to an Assessment Enquiry Panel  
In the event of non-attendance (in person, by telephone or internet) without good cause, of a student, at an Investigatory Interview the Chair will confirm the matter to be non-resolved and referred to an Assessment Enquiry Panel.

### **C9.4.4 Stage 2 – Assessment Enquiry Panel**

#### **C9.4.4.1 Written Information to the Student**

A student will be given the following information in writing, at least 5 working days in advance of a request to attend an Assessment Enquiry Panel:

- the reason for their attendance being required
- a copy of any relevant evidence
- the right to seek advice from Student Services and/or the Students' Union
- the right to accompaniment/ representation (as above)
- the right to present witnesses, if applicable

#### **C9.4.4.2 Purpose of the Assessment Enquiry Panel**

The purpose of the Assessment Enquiry Panel is to establish whether unfair practice has occurred.

#### **C9.4.4.3 Assessment Enquiry Panel Membership**

The membership of the investigatory interview will consist of:

- Chair (Senior Faculty Academic Nominated by the Dean)
- Member of Academic Staff who has not taught the student in relation to the assessment(s) under investigation or been a member of the Research Supervisory Team (nominated by the students' Head of School)
- Member of Academic Staff from another School within the Faculty

In attendance:

- Internal Examiner (the person identifying the alleged offence)
- Secretary
- Student
- Student's friend and/or representative, if applicable
- Witnesses, if applicable

#### **C9.4.4.4 Responsibilities of Student(s)**

It is the student(s) responsibility to:

- Co-operate with the regulations concerning the alleged offence
- Seek independent advice, if required (see C9.4.2)
- Attend the Assessment Enquiry Panel
- Provide details of any witnesses who will be in attendance, at least 2 days in advance of the Assessment Enquiry panel
- Demonstrate that the work is their own or that the alleged offence has not occurred

#### **C9.4.4.5 Outcomes of the Assessment Enquiry Panel**

The possible outcomes of the Assessment Enquiry Panel are:

- an offence has been admitted
- an offence has been found
- no offence has occurred

#### **C9.4.4.6 Action following Assessment Enquiry Panel**

Upon conclusion of an Assessment Enquiry Panel the following action may be taken:

- a) An offence has been admitted:  
The offence will be reported to the Academic Integrity Board or Research Degrees Subcommittee to determine penalty.
- b) An offence has been found:  
The offence will be reported to the Academic Integrity Board or Research Degrees Subcommittee to determine penalty.
- c) No offence has occurred:  
In the event of a finding that no offence has occurred the following apply:
  - the matter shall be considered to be concluded

- no report of it shall be made to the Academic Integrity Board or Research Degrees Sub-committee
- no report of it shall be made within the University
- The student will be considered in the usual way and the matter will not be raised in the proceedings of the Board of Examiners or Examination Committee.
- Any member of the Board or Committee who has been party to the allegation or the investigation shall totally disregard the original allegations.

#### **C9.4.4.7 Non-Attendance of Student at Assessment Enquiry Panel**

In the event of non-attendance (in person, by telephone or internet) without good cause, of a student, at an Assessment Enquiry Panel, the Panel in question is authorised to proceed in his, her or their absence.

### **C9.5 Action by the Academic Integrity Board or Research Degrees Sub-Committee**

#### **C9.5.1 Receipt of Offences**

The Academic Integrity Board for all taught awards or Research Degrees Sub-committee for all research awards, will receive reports of all admitted or found cases for the determination of penalty.

#### **C9.5.2 Extenuating Circumstances**

If a student admits the offence at any stage of these proceedings i.e. Investigatory Interview or Assessment Enquiry Panel, or an offence is found by an Assessment Enquiry Panel; the student should be advised of the following in respect of any extenuating circumstances which he or she may wish to adduce in explanation of his or her action.

- a) Submission of Extenuating Circumstances  
The need separately to submit these in writing to the relevant Faculty for consideration by the Academic Integrity Board or Research Degrees Sub-committee.
- b) Evidence  
The need to submit independent documentary evidence, alongside requests for mitigation.
- c) Upholding the Outcome  
That such submission does not negate the process whereby the offence was admitted, and is not an appeal - the submission simply provides an opportunity to draw attention to any extenuating circumstances relevant to the admission or finding. The admission or finding will not itself be overturned by the Academic Integrity Board or Research Degrees Sub-committee.
- d) Consideration of Extenuating Circumstances  
Any extenuating circumstances submitted will be considered by the Academic Integrity Board or Research Degrees Sub-committee only in regard of penalties to be determined in respect of the admitted offence.

#### **C9.5.3 Mitigation Outcomes**

Where the Academic Integrity Board accepts the extenuating circumstances, these will be taken into consideration when determining penalty.

#### **C9.5.4 Determination of Penalty**

Where an offence has been admitted or found a mark of zero will be attributed to the assessment for taught awards and the Academic Integrity Board will determine the penalty.

Any eligibility for re-assessment will be confirmed by the relevant Board of Examiners/ Examination Committee and be available at the next scheduled re-assessment period.

For research awards no mark will be attributed and the Research Degrees Sub-committee will determine the penalty using the schedule of decisions. (see C9.7.4)

#### **C9.5.5 Right to request an appeal hearing – Fail Withdraw**

All students have the right to request an appeal hearing to reconsider a decision of Fail Withdraw by the Academic Integrity Board or Research Degrees Sub-committee, where the University has agreed that there are valid grounds for the appeal (see section C16).

#### **C9.5.6 Range of Decisions**

The Academic Integrity Board or Research Degrees Sub-committee may take one of the decisions set out in the Schedule at C9.7. Penalties in respect of marks will be accompanied by the relevant letter of advice, warning, final warning or withdrawal

#### **C9.5.7 Academic Integrity**

The University wishes to promote good academic practice and the Academic Integrity Board or Research Degrees Sub-committee will provide details of the requirement for students to complete learning on positive academic practice following an offence.

#### **C9.5.8 Maximum penalty**

The Academic Integrity Board will be limited in its discretion to a maximum penalty of the student failing the level and being required to withdraw.

#### **C9.5.9 Entitlement to Lower Award**

In the event of a student being required to withdraw the student will be entitled to any lower award for which he or she is eligible subject to confirmation by the relevant Board of Examiners or Examination Committee.

### **C9.6 Documentation**

#### **C9.6.1 Finding that No Offence has Occurred**

In the event of a finding that no offence has occurred at any stage of these processes (i.e. Investigatory Interview and Assessment Enquiry Panel), the documentation associated with the allegation shall be shredded immediately after the decision is reached.

The responsibility for this rests with the Faculty.

#### **C9.6.2 Offence Admitted or Found**

Where an offence has been admitted, or has been found, at any stage of the proceedings, all documentation associated with the case shall be securely retained for the duration of the students' study in the University.

The responsibility for the secure retention of this material rests with the Faculty.

### **C9.7 Schedule of Penalties**

#### **C9.7.1 Schedule of Penalties for Taught Awards and Key to Taught Awards Tariff**

The Academic Integrity Board may determine to do any one of the following:

- A. Determine that the student may be awarded the full range of marks for the re-assessed work. A letter of advice will be sent to the student and they will be strongly

recommended to take and pass a non-credit bearing module on academic integrity. This is an exceptional outcome normally reserved for cases with mitigation at level 4.

- B. Determine that the mark for re-assessed work will be capped to the minimum pass mark.

A letter of warning will be sent to the student they will be strongly recommended to take and pass a non-credit bearing module on academic integrity.

- C. Determine that the re-assessed work will be capped to the minimum threshold pass mark.

A letter of final warning will be sent to the student, emphasising that any repeat offence may result in a more serious sanction, they will be strongly recommended to take and pass a non-credit bearing module on academic integrity.

- D. Determine that the student has failed the level and is required to withdraw from the programme of study.

The Board of Examiners will advise the student of their entitlement to a contained award or credit achieved, if applicable.

### **C9.7.2 Tariff of Decisions Available to the Academic Integrity Board**

Level	Offence Occurrence			
	1	2	3	4
Level 4	B	B	C	D
Level 5	B	C	D	N/A
Level 6	B	C	D	N/A
Level 7	B	C	D	N/A

### **C9.7.3 Considerations upon awarding penalty**

- Students may submit extenuating circumstances pertaining to their admitted or found case for consideration by the Academic Integrity Board.
- The circumstances and the gravity of the offence may result in a different penalty being applied to that shown in the tariff.
- Re-assessment is subject to the limitations of regulation C3.5.4 which states that the opportunity for re-assessment will be given once only. The Board of Examiners or Examination Committee will apply this regulation upon receipt of the Academic Integrity Board decision.
- Where courses are subject to Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body regulations the Board of Examiners or Examination Committee will apply the penalty within the context of the PSRB regulatory requirements.

#### **C9.7.4 Schedule of Decisions Available to the Research Degrees Sub-committee Research Awards**

The Research Degrees Sub-committee may determine to do one of the following depending on the circumstances and gravity of the offence.

Awards and Level	Available Penalties	
MRes – Level 7	Resubmit	Withdraw from the programme of study
MPhil – Level 7	Resubmit	Withdraw from the programme of study
PhD / Professional Doctorate / European PhD / PhD by Existing Published Work – Level 8	Resubmit	Withdraw from the programme of study

#### **C9.7.5 Considerations upon awarding penalty**

- Students may submit extenuating circumstances pertaining to their proven case for consideration by the Research Degrees Sub-Committee.
- The circumstances and the gravity of the offence may result in a different penalty being applied to that shown in the tariff.