



# Higher Education Academic Misconduct Procedure

## 1. Introduction

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At Activate Learning, we value academic integrity and uphold the highest standards of honesty and trust in all aspects of our educational community.

Maintaining academic integrity is essential for fostering a culture of learning, integrity, and ethical conduct among our students and staff. A guide to understanding and the expectation we have for our learners at Activate Learning can be found [here](#).

Activate Learning takes all reported incidences of academic misconduct very seriously and therefore makes considerable effort to help students understand the issue and how to avoid being suspected of and committing these offences. Activate Learning routinely makes use of various software packages to detect plagiarism e.g. Turnitin, and will take action against anyone who has committed it.

Activate Learning condemns academic malpractice and misconduct in all forms. This may include but is not limited to:

- Obtaining unauthorised access to assessment material

- Introducing unauthorised material into a room where an assessment is being conducted under controlled conditions

- Collusion or attempted collusion with other persons on assessments which are designed to be undertaken by each student individually

- Copying or closely imitating the work of another student, with or without

- Exhibiting disruptive behaviour during examinations or other assessments conducted under controlled conditions

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Failure to reference or acknowledge sources adequately, in a way, which presents the work as if it has been authored by the student. This may, for example include:

- Using close paraphrasing of aspects of other authors work without acknowledging the source
- Directly quoting from a source but failing to include quotation marks
- Presenting substantial extracts from other sources without clearly indicating the origin with quotation marks and appropriate references

The above list is not exhaustive and other offenses may be considered by the Academic Misconduct panel at the discretion of Activate Learning.

Activate Learning encourages their staff and students to utilise technology responsibly, ethically, and in accordance with [\\_\\_\\_\\_\\_](#). This includes respecting copyright laws, properly citing digital sources, and using software, databases, and online resources in a lawful and ethical manner.

**Generative AI** presents a highly compelling opportunity to enhance our students' learning experience. It holds the potential to empower them with increased engagement in higher-order critical thinking and creative endeavours. Please refer to [\\_\\_\\_\\_\\_ statement about AI](#).

These regulations relate to the provision of higher education programmes delivered at Activate Learning awarded by Pearson or one of our partner universities. Students undertaking a programme of study awarded by Oxford Brookes University<sup>1</sup>, University of Greenwich<sup>2</sup>, University of Reading<sup>3</sup>, Kingston University<sup>4</sup> and Middlesex University<sup>5</sup> may access t

This Academic Misconduct Procedure has been produced in line with the guiding principles of:

- [QAA UK Quality Code for Higher Education: Assessment \(Guiding Principle 10\)](#)
- [QAA Contracting to Cheat in Higher Education](#)
- [QAA Academic Integrity Charter](#)
- [BTEC Centre Guide to Quality Assurance and Assessment \(Level 4-7\)](#)
- [Centre guidance: Dealing with malpractice and maladministration in vocational qualifications](#)

The Guiding principle 10: Assessment encourages academic integrity states that *Assessment is designed to minimise opportunities for students to commit academic misconduct, including plagiarism, self-plagiarism and contract cheating. Wherever possible, a suitable variety of assessment methods should be used, to minimise the availability of opportunities for students to incorporate plagiarised work by another author, or previous work by the student, either within the level of study or across levels. Policies and procedures relevant to academic integrity are clear, accessible and actively promoted rather than simply made available.*" (QAA, 2018)

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.brookes.ac.uk/students/student-disputes/student-conduct/academic-misconduct/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://docs.gre.ac.uk/rep/sas/academic-misconduct-policy-and-procedure-taught-awards>

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.reading.ac.uk/cqsd/QualityAss147.9870tW\\*nBT1RG\[h\]-3\(tt\)-3\(p\)9\(s\)-6\(-\)-3\(/www\)4\(.re\)-5\(a\)9\(d\)-3\(i\)-4\(n\)-3\(g\)9\(.a\)-5](https://www.reading.ac.uk/cqsd/QualityAss147.9870tW*nBT1RG[h]-3(tt)-3(p)9(s)-6(-)-3(/www)4(.re)-5(a)9(d)-3(i)-4(n)-3(g)9(.a)-5)



The Higher Education Learning Partnership (HELP) office publishes guidance on referencing and plagiarism through the online HE Student Handbook and regulations are part of the guidance and help through a dedicated HE study support team.

## 2. Scope of the Regulations

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These regulations cover all higher education provision, including programmes that form part of a higher or degree apprenticeships, or are delivered through a sub-contracting arrangement.

## 3. Academic Misconduct Definitions

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Activate Learning recognises three types of academic misconduct:

### a) Academic Negligence

This is regarded as the least serious offence and covers first time minor offences. It includes plagiarism that is small in scale, not related to the work of other students, and which is considered to have resulted from lack of understanding, ability or carelessness.

A case of academic misconduct that relates to academic negligence is normally investigated under the *'informal stage'*.

### b) Academic Malpractice

This can include a 1<sup>st</sup> offence where more widespread plagiarism is identified such as:

- Evidence of extensive paraphrasing of material with no acknowledgement of the source
- Systematic failure to reference
- Submitting work which has already been submitted for another assignment/programme

When more than one assessment is found to be affected by plagiarism (where a number of pieces of work/assessments are handed in at the same time). When this happens the academic misconduct for all pieces of assessment should be considered and treated as **ONE** offence.

### c) Academic Cheating

This is regarded as the most serious offence and includes:

- Plagiarism in dissertations/final year projects
- Collusion with other students
- Theft
- Purchasing or commissioning
- Contract cheating
- Falsification of results/data
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Informal Stage  
Stage One  
Stage Two  
Appeal

The above stages are not sequential, and an offence may be dealt with at any stage subject to the criteria set out in Section 5 of this procedure.

#### **4. Support for students**

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Wherever possible, students should have the opportunities to seek advice for any matters relating to academic misconduct before it becomes a concern. This should include guidance from relevant academic staff and HE study support explaining the importance of references and acknowledging source materials within their work. How to avoid academic misconduct and plagiarism should be a key component of the student induction programme.

Students will be entitled at any stage of the academic misconduct process to be accompanied and/or represented by one member of staff, friend, relative, or representative of



and supporting documents available to them to help avoid plagiarism

***Penalty:*** Award a grade for the assessment (or components) ignoring the academic misconduct issues unless this is specified in the assessment criteria for the unit

Where the assessment type does not permit work to be corrected and re-submitted within the same assessment period (for example online examinations or practical assessments), the work should be marked as appropriate taking into account what work is original and the grade criteria in relation to academic practice. The student should be invited to a meeting



**Penalty:**

*1<sup>st</sup> Offence:*

*The student to re-submit the entire piece of assessment in question, having rectified the academic misconduct issues. The Work will be either uncapped or capped for the component at the discretion of the Panel.*

*2<sup>nd</sup> and subsequent Offences:*

*The student is required to resubmit a brand-new piece of work. The unit capped at Pass.*

### 6.3 Stage Two (Academic Cheating)

This is regarded as the most serious offence and considered Academic Cheating. It includes plagiarism of dissertations, collusion with other students, theft, falsification, modification, examination irregularities, purchasing/commissioning of a piece of work.

The Academic Registrar will arrange for a Stage Two meeting to be convened at the earliest convenience following assessment of alleged offence and will formally notify the student

The possible outcomes from a Stage Two meeting are:

Finding that no offence has occurred no report of the investigation shall be made and all documentation relating to the allegation shall be shredded.

Admission of the offence by the student concerned - a report of the matter will be produced for the purpose of recording the offence and the decision on any penalty will be made. The Academic Misconduct Panel will write to the student and notify them of the outcome. Outcome of the panel will be reported to the Assessment Board.

Non-resolution of the issue, the student has not admitted the offence the Stage Two panel will consider its decision. This will be reached on the basis of the written and oral evidence, and the standard of proof required is the balance of probabilities. The decisions open to the Panel are:

- finding that no offence has occurred
- finding that the alleged offence has occurred and submit a decision on the penalty to be agreed

duration of their study in the college.

There is a requirement to provide the student with the opportunity to appeal should they wish to do so.

If a student fails to attend the Stage Two meeting without reasonable explanation or fails to communicate with the College in any way, the Stage Two meeting will proceed in their absence. The student will be informed of the outcome of the Stage Two meeting via the Stage 2 outcome letter which must be sent to them normally within 5 working days of the meeting.

**Penalty:**

*Either:*





References:

QAA (29 November 2018) The UK Quality Code for Higher Education: Assessment, accessed on 28<sup>th</sup> March 2019, <https://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/quality-code/advice-and-guidance/assessment>





**Appendix 1: Terms of Reference Academic Misconduct Panel**

<b>Terms of Reference Academic Misconduct Panel</b>	
Chair	Director of Higher Education
Membership	HE Academic Registrar (or nominee) An academic member of staff not associated with the assessment
In attendance	The member of staff asserting malpractice/ misconduct or their nominee Student A representative of the student body
Minutes	Secretary
Frequency	As required
Summary of purpose	The academic misconduct panel exists as an impartial body to judge cases of alleged academic malpractice, based upon the evidence brought before it.  The academic misconduct panel will only make a decision on the malpractice/misconduct and evidence presented to it. The Assessment Board / Examination Committee will make the ultimate decision on the student's progression or award, failure and reassessment.
Terms of Reference	To consider the evidence as presented. To interview the student and appropriate staff as necessary. To review the process taken in the incident.

