

Student Academic Integrity Procedure

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Changes and Reason for Changes – New Procedure (replacing former Plagiarism procedure)



STUDENT ACADEMIC INTEGRITY PROCEDURE

1. Introduction

All UWS students are expected to uphold the values of academic integrity. This document outlines the University's approach to detecting, investigating and, where appropriate, disciplining incidences of plagiarism and/or breaches of academic integrity.

2. Definitions

The University defines plagiarism in regulation 3.51 and 3.52 of the University Regulatory Framework. Plagiarism is a form of cheating as defined in Regulation 3.49.

In addition to plagiarism, students may face investigation and, where appropriate disciplinary action, where they have been considered to have breached the University's expected standards of academic integrity and acted in a dishonest manner in the completion of any academic assessments. This is defined as any attempt to gain an unfair advantage and includes but is not limited to:

- Collusion – defined as two or more students working together without the prior authorisation of appropriate academic staff to produce the same or partially the same piece of work, and then attempting to present this work as their own
- Contract cheating – defined as commissioning academic work to be completed on your behalf, including the use of essay mills or purchasing of work
- Falsification of data / results – defined as the misrepresentation of the results of experimental work or the presentation of fictitious results;
- Subversion of, or attempts to circumvent, similarity software (e.g., Turnitin) and other anti-cheating protocols
- Bribery – defined as the paying, offering or attempted exchange of inducement for information or material intended to advantage the recipient in an assessment
- Personation – defined as a substitute taking the place of a student in an examination, preparing coursework for assessment on behalf of another student or submitting coursework for assessment that has been prepared by someone other than the student to whom the resulting grade would be attributed
- Submission of unauthorised material in an assessment, such as material generated by artificial intelligence where such material has been specifically deemed unauthorised for that assessment item

Poor academic practice (e.g., weak referencing or lack of understanding of proper practice) does not in isolation represent a breach of academic integrity. However, repeated acts across multiple submissions may be considered to be a disciplinary matter depending on the severity of misdemeanour and the behaviours of the student.

3. Detecting plagiarism and other breaches of academic integrity

To support detection of breaches of academic integrity:

- All written coursework assignments must be submitted electronically as Microsoft Word documents, unless another format has been requested by or agreed with the Module Co-ordinator.
- The University's plagiarism detection software should be used in conjunction with other means of detection to analyse assessment submissions in all modes where text-based plagiarism may be an issue.
- Where it is suspected that a student is submitting work that is not their own (e.g. contract cheating, use of material generated by artificial intelligence where such

material is unauthorised for that assessment item) the assessor may take approaches to verify this is the work of the student such as requesting plans and draft work, or undertaking interview or viva voce examination with the student to form a judgement on whether or not the student produced the work themselves.

For other breaches of academic integrity, any relevant evidence from the module co-ordinator may be provided, including email correspondence and testimony, and the outcomes of any interview to determine the provenance of the work. The Student Academic Integrity Panel will have the authority to ask the student questions to investigate any alleged improper conduct or reports of academic misdemeanour.

4. Academic Integrity Panel

Any suspected case of plagiarism or breach of academic integrity standards will be referred in the first instance by the member of staff concerned to the Chair of the Student Academic Integrity Panel in the relevant School.

The Dean of School will be responsible for the appointment of Chairs of Student Academic Integrity Panel in their School. Each School will determine the specific membership of its Student Academic Integrity Panel with the expectation that each Panel consists of a minimum of:

- Chair or co-Chairs, approved by the Dean of School; and
- Two members of academic staff from the School, appointed by the Student Academic Integrity Panel Chair.

The School should seek to ensure the Panel membership is reflective of the diversity of the School. It is recommended that Schools convene a minimum of two Panels per term to allow for fast resolution of allegations and communication of outcomes to students. Schools may wish to retain a wider active pool of chairs and panel members to provide sufficient staffing for panels throughout the academic year.

The member of staff who refers a suspected case of plagiarism or academic integrity breach will not serve as a member of that Panel for the purpose of considering the case, but, where requested, will attend the Panel for the purpose of presenting evidence.

It is the responsibility of the module co-ordinator to collect and present evidence to the Student Academic Integrity Panel. Where appropriate (e.g., cases where a similarity report does not adequately capture alleged academic integrity breach), the Panel will have the authority to seek additional information from the student and relevant staff through a conversation.

Appendix I outlines the process for the operation of Student Academic Integrity Panels within Schools. In the instance of a first referral for plagiarism, the allegation will be pre-screened within the School and an indicative decision produced by the Panel.

Where a case to answer is established, the Panel Chair will inform the student in writing of the alleged offence and offer the student the opportunity to attend the Panel in support of their case. The student will have the right to be accompanied to the Panel by a witness of their choice. Please note that, although the student can be accompanied to the meeting, the person nominated cannot be a solicitor or speak on behalf of the student. The main aim of allowing the student to have someone with them is to support them through the process. The student will have the option to submit a written statement and any other additional information to the Panel in lieu of attending the Panel. The final decision will then be confirmed, in writing, after this meeting.

In the instance of a second referral to the Panel, the student will automatically be invited to attend a panel.

5. Penalties

The Panel will determine whether an offence has been committed and, if so, the appropriate action required. The School Academic Integrity Panel will maintain a record of decisions and report regularly to the Disciplinary Committee on numbers and categories of cases.

The Student Academic Integrity Panel will have the power to choose from the following outcomes and actions.

Class	Category	Penalty / Action	Additional guidance
1	No case to answer	No penalty.	Used in instances where the Panel determines the student has been incorrectly referred to the Panel. No record will be retained.
2	Poor academic practice	Student is provided with clear feedback to improve the academic integrity of their work.	If poor academic practice is evident the Panel may choose to recommend additional engagement with training and support. Student not guilty of plagiarism but record of notification will be kept by School.
3	Minor	Student is given a formal written warning that they have breached the University expectations for academic integrity.	The Panel may require the student to undertake remedial activity from development of academic skills up to and including resubmission with loss of attempt, with resubmission grade capped at the threshold mark of the module. Record of decision will be kept by School.
4	Major	Invoke disciplinary process, which may result in penalties including reprimand, suspension or expulsion from the University.	The student will be referred to the Senate Disciplinary Committee.

The outcomes will be communicated by University student email in a timely manner.

A student will have the right to appeal decisions of the Panel. Such appeals will be submitted and considered in line with Chapter 6 of the UWS Regulatory Framework.

Where appropriate students may also be subject to the Conduct, Competence and Fitness to Practice Procedure.

If a student wishes to be supported during this process, they should contact one of Students' Union Advice Workers – contact information is available via the following link: - <https://www.uwsunion.org.uk/advice/>

