

HE PLAGARISM AND ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT POLICY

POLICY VERSION NUMBER	01
MEMBER OF STAFF RESPONSIBLE FOR POLICY	Head of Department for Higher Education

RECORD OF REVISIONS TO POLICY	
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Introduction

This Policy should be read in conjunction with the JCQ General and Vocational Qualifications Instructions for Conducting Exams as well as Individual Awarding Body Exam requirements including Academic Misconduct Procedure for Pearson EdExcel HND/C Programmes and University of Bedfordshire validated programmes.

Purpose

The document applies to all students studying Higher Education at Barnfield College including staff on HE courses. EXAMINATION CONDUCT AND INVIGILATION POLICY will be used for exams and the College's COMPLIMENTS & COMPLAINTS POLICY AND PROCEDURE may be referred to for appeals. If the academic misconduct involves a member of staff then the relevant HR policy must be referred to.

What is academic misconduct?

Acts of academic misconduct may take many forms. They are likely to fall into one or more of the following categories:

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is taking the work of another person or source and using it as if it were your own. The source of the original material is hidden from the marker. Not referencing it properly or paraphrasing without acknowledgement of the source, or by not mentioning it as another's work. Work includes, but is not restricted to, written work, ideas, musical compositions, computer programs, artwork, films, designs or survey results, diagrams, graphs, drawings and presentations. Plagiarism may occur in all forms of assessment, including written examinations. Students are taught how to reference and the Learning Resource Centre can support with these skills so that the work of others can be made clear in assessment submissions.

Self-plagiarism (or double submission)

Self-plagiarism is resubmitting without approval, previously submitted work (without proper or prior acknowledgement). This may take the form of copying either the whole piece of work or part of it. This does not include agreed resubmissions or formative assessment feeding into summative assessment.

Collusion

Collusion occurs when two or more students collaborate in the preparation and production of work which is ultimately submitted and is represented by each to be the product of their individual efforts, or where there is unauthorised co-operation between a student and another person in the preparation and production of work which is presented as their own. The exception to this is when official approval (eg in the case of group projects), has been granted.

Falsifying experimental or other investigative results

Information that has been collected by scientific investigation, the compilation of questionnaire results etc must not be falsified. Research cannot be made up or altered to provide a more favourable result and evidence to support results is expected to be available for evidence to support conclusions made.

Taking unauthorised material (including electronic devices) into an examination

Students must not take in materials or electronic devices of any sort that are not specifically permitted as part of the exam requirements. This is regardless of whether or not they could be used to gain advantage and whether or not used. Any written material accessible to students which may place them at an unfair advantage is not permitted including the hand or arms.

Contracting another to write a piece of assessed work or writing a piece of assessed work for another

Students must not request or employ a person to undertake work on behalf of another. This includes assessments done for someone else, in full or in part, by either a fellow student, a friend, a family member; or employing an external organisation to complete assessed work on your behalf. It includes sitting an examination for someone else. Students must not obtain material from internet sites or other sources of work. Penalties for this type of unfair means will apply to both a student who does work on behalf of another and the student who has work done.

Copying from, or communicating with, another examination candidate during an examination

A student must not communicate in any way with another student during an examination, disturb other students, nor must they copy from another student or from documentation during an examination.

Bribery

A student must not offer or give any academic staff money, gifts or any other advantage which is intended to induce or reward impropriety in the marking of his/her examination or assessment.

There is a separate **Barnfield College Anti Bribery Policy** please refer to this.

Preventative Measures Against Academic Misconduct

Students are advised to take particular care in respect of the following:

i) Helping others

Students should ensure that they protect their own work, submit it themselves and do not allow other students to use work on their behalf. Students are encouraged to discuss and share ideas and information, however those who assist others to commit academic misconduct will be subject to the same penalties as those who use unfair means.

ii) Referencing

Students should check with their tutor and/or curriculum areas for particular requirements of submissions which the tutor should make clear on assignments. Students using work produced by other people will need to ensure that they acknowledge or reference the source of the work. Marks may be deducted for poor referencing. Poor referencing, if extensive, may appear as if the student is trying to claim credit for the work and this may be deemed to be committing plagiarism.

iii) Referencing support

The requirement to reference is introduced at induction. Plagiarism is noted in Handbooks and the policy is also referred to. Referencing requirements are expected to be made clear on assignments by tutors. Guidance on referencing and the Harvard referencing system are available from the Learning Resource Centre, through the VLE and from course tutors. If students are struggling, they may wish to contact the tutor directly and are advised to complete work and use formative feedback to further guide them on this.. There are handouts printed and available to students on

referencing for those who find accessing this material on line difficult and these are also available in some classrooms, in the Learning Resource Centre and in the HE common room. HE students may use laptops in the HE centre to support them with access to digital information and the VLE.

3.0 Policy Statements

3.1 Dealing with Academic Misconduct: Preliminary Stage

3.1.1 A case may come to light through the use of plagiarism detection software e.g. Turnitin. Cases may be reported by the marker of an assignment, by an examiner (internal or external), by course leader, invigilator or any other member of staff.

3.1.2 Misconduct must be evidenced. For example the marker of an assignment should highlight those passages and should indicate the extent of plagiarism, where possible as a percentage of the assessment in question.

3.1.3 Should an academic member suspect academic misconduct in a piece of assessed work and initially there is no clear evidence, a student may be interviewed by an appropriate member of academic staff other than the marker.

3.1.4 All cases of suspected academic misconduct must be reported for preliminary consideration to the Subject Area Lead for Higher Education (SAL for HE), or managerial nominee. It is the action (academic misconduct) which must be considered, not the intention of a student either to deceive or gain an unfair advantage.

3.1.7 Where evidence of suspected academic misconduct comes to light, it is the course leaders responsibility to notify the SAL, with immediate effect, at any time after either individual units or an award has been conferred; the SAL for HE (or nominee) will take into account the extent of the alleged academic misconduct, the level and prior experience of the student and the conventions of the discipline and will decide on action required, informed by and referring to the awarding bodies procedures, and notifying that awarding body in accordance with their requirements. This is done through the exams' department in the case of Pearson's awards or by the course leader referring the issue through the link tutor to the University of Bedfordshire.

3.1.8 The SAL will take into account the extent of the alleged academic misconduct and if there is no case to answer will inform the Head of Department who may make a decision to remove this from records. This includes:

- In University of Bedfordshire courses it is a matter of poor academic practice (see para 3.1.9 below)
- When the student assessment and declaration has not been signed.
- There is evidence to indicate that academic misconduct may have occurred which requires further investigation.

3.1.9 Poor academic practice often involves poor referencing, where the work may be referenced and cited, but the correct format or system is not used. Such scenarios might not reflect plagiarism but demonstrate a lack of academic rigour, based on the teaching and information a student has received and therefore grading may be penalised by using the normal assessment criteria. The student should be given clear advice on how to correct this poor practice.

3.1.11 Where the preliminary consideration finds that academic misconduct may have occurred. At this stage all University students will deal with the awarding body. The student will be informed of this in writing and will be advised that the matter is referred to Barnfield College Academic Misconduct Panel (AMP) led by the Head of Department and the exams office who will submit and notify:

For Pearson: Email a JCQ Form M1 with supporting documentation to pqsmalpractice@pearson.com.

The University of Bedfordshire for further investigation.

3.2 Dealing with Academic Misconduct: Formal Stage

3.2.1 Where there is evidence to indicate that academic misconduct may have occurred, the case should be heard by the AMP. The student will be given a minimum of 10 working days' notice in writing by letter or e-mail before the meeting of the Panel except where s/he has agreed in writing that shorter notice is acceptable. The 10 working days will be counted from the date of the notification. The student will be informed, in writing, of the nature of the allegations and be provided with the evidence. The college will refer to the Joint Council for Qualifications.

3.3 Academic Misconduct Panel (AMP)

3.3.1 The purpose of the AMP is to determine whether an offence of academic misconduct has been committed and to inform the awarding body accordingly providing evidence (if required by the examining body at this stage). This process may only be applicable to College students if, at this stage of proceedings, they are not conducted by the awarding/ examining body. If the awarding body conducts the investigation, then details will be sent to the head of centre and the accused involved.

The membership of an AMP is:

- Head of Department for Higher Education (or nominee)
- Subject Area Lead for higher education
- The AMP will not comprise any representative who has been involved in the assessment of student cases being heard and therefore substitute members must be available and a record will be kept of the meeting.

3.4 Attendance at an Academic Misconduct Panel

3.4.1 A student may be accompanied by one person of their choosing at the Academic Misconduct Panel. The student may submit written evidence to the Panel at least 5 working days before the date of the Panel meeting. If, for exceptional reasons the student is unable to attend the meeting of the Panel, they may submit written representation in support of their case.

3.5 Representation at Meetings and Hearings

Where a representative is attending a hearing on the student's behalf:

- The Panel will only be required to consider the representations which are made by the representative on the student's behalf at the hearing,

- the representative must not be someone who has been suspended or excluded be a member of academic staff from the college and
- the name and role of the representative must be presented before the hearing.

3.6 Legal Representation

3.6.1 The student must apply for permission if he / she wishes to be represented at any hearing of the Academic Misconduct Panel by an individual who is legally qualified. To apply for permission, the student must give written notice to the Head of Department at least five working days before the date of the scheduled board.

3.7 Recording of Proceedings

3.7.1 The audio recording of meetings and hearings is prohibited, subject to reasonable adjustment as may be agreed by the College, where required under the Equality Act 2010.

3.8 Academic Penalties

3.8.1 In considering which academic penalty to impose, the AMP shall take into consideration the awarding body guidance and investigation of procedures and adhere accordingly to their finding and results. The College takes seriously all incidents of academic misconduct, and in line with the awarding bodies regulations the most serious offences can lead to:

- Withdrawal from a course
- Disciplinary action (see Disciplinary Policy)

3.8.4 Proven cases will be referred back to the Board of Examiners for implementation of the penalty. The Board of Examiners will inform the student of its decision in the normal way and of any academic requirements following the implementation of the penalty.

3.9 Appeals

3.9.1 In cases heard by an AMP a student may appeal against a decision of guilt or a penalty imposed by the AMP. The appeal must then follow the Complaints Policy procedure if the complaint is against the College.

3.9.2

An appeal will be addressed to the awarding body were the decision is made by an external examining body and in accordance with the current policy and procedures at the time of the appeal. Students should therefore look to the awarding body policies for guidance. An appeal can usually be made on one or more of the following grounds:

- There is significant new evidence which could not have been made available at the board.
- The hearing was not conducted fairly;
- That a decision of guilt or the penalty imposed was unreasonable.