The Sheffield College

POLICY

HE Academic Misconduct Policy

[Document Reference:]

Document administration

Policy family	Learning
ELT owner	Executive Director of Strategy and Systems Improvement
SLT lead	Choose an item.
Department	Higher Education
Final approving body	Governing Body
Approval date	Click or tap to enter a date.
Review frequency	Every 3 years
Next reapproval date	Click or tap to enter a date.
Equality impact assessment	Completion date: Click or tap to enter a date.	EQIA not required ☐
Environmental impact assessment	Completion date: Click or tap to enter a date.	ENIA not required ☐
Publication	Staff intranet ☐	External website ☐

Version control log

Date	Version No	Summary of changes	Reviewed by (SLT lead)
08/05/2024	1		

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1. Purpose

1.1: The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance on HE Academic Misconduct, for both students and staff. This includes guidance on the use of Artificial Intelligence in relation to HE Academic Misconduct.

1.2: Academic integrity is fundamental to the reputation of individual students and to academic institutions. UC Sheffield is committed both to developing high standards of academic practice among its students and to safeguarding the standards of its academic awards by detecting and acting upon cases of academic misconduct in an appropriate manner.

1.3: Academic misconduct is committed when a student does not follow published assessment protocols or tries to gain an unfair advantage by breaking, or not following, the academic regulations concerning any part of the assessment process. This procedure applies to all students on taught courses, within UC Sheffield.

1.4: In addition to these procedures, students on professional courses may also be subject to supplementary Professional Statutory or Regulatory body regulations and procedures. These procedures will be specified in individual course documentation.

1.5: The purpose of the regulations in this policy are to facilitate investigation of and, if proven, levy a penalty on any form of unacceptable academic behaviour by a candidate taking any qualification (academic, professional or combined).

1.6: The quality and standards of the UC Sheffield's awards and qualifications are undermined by all forms of academic misconduct.

2. Scope, aims and objectives

2.1: Policy and procedures for dealing with academic misconduct will be fair, transparent and consistently applied to all cases.

2.2: If academic misconduct is alleged, there must be sufficient evidence to substantiate the allegations on the balance of probability.

2.3: UC Sheffield reserves the right to use any reasonable and fair means of identifying academic misconduct.

2.4: The investigation and consideration of all forms of academic misconduct, and the consequences arising therein, are not to be considered within the Assessment Board structure, but by a separate panel.

2.5: Categories of Academic Misconduct

2.5.1: Poor Academic Practice
This may arise from a lack of understanding of the standard methods of acknowledging the source of words, ideas or diagrams in a piece of work or the appropriate levels of collaboration or the correct behaviour within an exam. It may also be applicable where the extent does not justify further investigative proceedings or a penalty, for example, for errors made through carelessness.

2.5.2: Academic Misconduct
This is behaviour which, if not detected, would give a student an unfair advantage in an assessment. The main difference between academic misconduct and severe academic misconduct is the extent of the alleged misconduct. Indicative examples of what constitute academic misconduct are:
- Failure to correctly reference sources and claim an idea as original work (i.e. plagiarism)
- Submitting for assessment an item which has been previously submitted for credit in another module with little change made to the assessment (i.e. self-plagiarism)
- Submitting coursework in collaboration with another student (i.e. collusion)

2.5.3: Severe Academic Misconduct:
Where there is clear evidence of extensive or substantial attempts to gain an unfair advantage or where there has been a previous, proven case of academic misconduct or severe academic misconduct against a student. Any proven allegations of contract cheating, impersonation or fabrication or falsification of data will always initially be considered as a case of severe academic misconduct. This would include attempting to submit AI generated work as their own.

3. Responsibilities and Procedures

3.1: Procedure for the Determination of Allegations of Academic Misconduct

3.1.1 Where plagiarism is suspected, which could be through evidence generated via Turnitin, the **assessor** should have an initial, informal discussion with the learner. It may be that the student has misunderstood the brief and acted in error, for example, failing to reference sources appropriately. In such cases the assessor should:

- Make sure the learner is aware of the serious consequences of plagiarism.
- Arrange for the learner to re-submit the assessment following an appropriate revision of referencing, citation, etc. The grade will be capped according to the validating partners regulatory requirements.
- Re-issue plagiarism guidelines to the student and refer the student to the **HE Personal Tutor**.

3.1.2 Where the inappropriate use of Artificial Intelligence tools to generate assessed work is suspected, the **assessor** should have an initial discussion with the learner to determine whether such tools have been used. If the learner admits the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools to generate the assessed work and it is the first time the use of AI has been detected, the **assessor** should:

- Make sure the learner is aware of the serious consequences of using AI to generate assessed work.
- Arrange for the learner to re-submit the assessment, without the use of AI. The grade will be capped according to the validating partners regulatory requirements.

3.1.3 If the initial discussion fails to lead to a satisfactory outcome and the examiner decides the poor academic practice is sufficient to warrant an allegation of plagiarism or any other form of Academic Misconduct, including the inappropriate use of AI, they must, within 20 working days of the student being informed, complete the relevant Academic Misconduct Form and forward it along with the work, the assignment brief, relevant supporting evidence and any other guidance given to the **Head of Quality and Enhancement**.

3.1.4 The **Head of Quality and Enhancement** will investigate the allegation, along with the relevant **Head of School** and the **Assistant Principal for Higher Education**. These staff members will form the **Academic Misconduct panel**, who will investigate any unresolved allegations of Academic Misconduct.

3.1.5 Allegations of academic misconduct will be investigated and will be determined on the balance of probabilities (more likely than not). All cases will be investigated using the guiding principles of transparency and fairness.

3.1.6 The **Academic Misconduct panel** will consider all the material presented with the regards to the case and will assess the seriousness of the academic misconduct taking into account the penalty criteria. Using this criteria, the panel will decide on the appropriate penalty. The range of penalties is available as a separate document and will be made available to staff.

3.1.7 Investigating and dealing with academic misconduct also involves academic judgements from appropriate members of staff.

3.2: Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

3.2.1: **Students** and **centre staff** must be aware of the risks of using AI and must be clear on what constitutes malpractice.

3.2.2: **Students** must make sure that work submitted for assessment is demonstrably their own. If any sections of their work are reproduced directly from AI generated responses, those elements must be identified by the **student**, through the references used and they must understand that this will not be considered for assessment.

3.2.3: **Teachers** and **assessors** must only accept work for assessment which they consider to be the students' own.

3.2.4: Where **teachers** have doubts about the authenticity of student work submitted for assessment (for example, they suspect that parts of it have been generated by AI but this has not been acknowledged), they must investigate and take appropriate action.

3.2.5: Due to the rapid changing nature of AI, updates to the policy may happen in-year, as more guidance is given to the college from awarding bodies.

4. Definitions

4.1: Plagiarism
This is where someone tries to pass off another's work, thoughts or ideas as their own, whether deliberately or unintentionally, without appropriate acknowledgement. Plagiarism can take a number of forms, including:

- Complete plagiarism: The substantial and unauthorised use of the work or ideas of another person without acknowledgement of the source, including copying the work of another student, eg writing, computer programmes, designs, experiment results, music or copying of text directly from a website without acknowledgement.
- Partial plagiarism: The inclusion of several sentences or more from another person's work, which has not been referenced in accordance with a validating partner's conventions on academic referencing and citation; the summarising of another person's work by simply changing a few words or altering the order of presentation, without acknowledgement. This may be intentional with the aim being to deceive the marker, or unintentional as a result, for example, of poor study skills.
- Self plagiarism or duplication: Copying work that was originally completed and submitted by the student and resubmitted for another purpose, without acknowledgement of this, unless resubmission is allowed.

4.2: Collusion
This is where a student undertakes work with others, without acknowledgement, e.g.

- Submits as entirely his/her own work, work done in collaboration with another person, with the intention to gain an unfair advantage, or
- Colludes with another student to complete work which is intended to be submitted as that other student's own unaided work or
- Knowingly permits another student to copy all or part of his/her own work and to submit it as that student's own unaided work.
- If collusion is suspected and if after investigation it cannot be established which individual(s) is/are responsible, all students involved will be deemed responsible, provided there is sufficient evidence to substantiate the allegations on the balance of probability.

4.3: Falsifying Data
This is where a student presents data in laboratory reports, projects, dissertations, etc based on experimental/ experiential work which the student claims to have carried out but which he/she has invented or obtained by unfair means.

4.4: Malpractice in an Exam
Either possessing or using materials prohibited in the examination venue and/or breaching any of the pre-determined exam conditions. This may include but is not limited to actions such as:

- Continuing after the invigilator has announced the end of the examination;
- Copying, or attempting to copy, from any other candidate during the examination;
- Communication of any kind with any other person other than an authorised invigilator or other member of staff during an examination;
- Possession of any written, printed or electronic materials in the examination room unless expressly permitted;
- Involvement in impersonation of another during an examination or other assessment.

Appendices if required