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OF ESTATE MANAGEMENT

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# Academic Misconduct

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## Procedure

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# Academic Misconduct

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# Academic Misconduct Procedure

## 1. Introduction

Good academic practice and academic integrity are central to the values promoted by UCEM. It is important that all UCEM students are assessed on their own ability and that no student is allowed to gain an unfair advantage over others, or to diminish the quality or academic standing of a UCEM award.

This procedure outlines what types of activity constitute academic misconduct and how cases of academic misconduct will be investigated by UCEM.

UCEM defines academic misconduct as cheating, attempts to cheat, plagiarism, collusion and any other attempts to gain an unfair advantage in assessments. Academic Misconduct is a disciplinary offence under the Terms and Conditions of Registration and is punishable by a range of sanctions.

UCEM distinguishes between academic misconduct and poor academic practice. Poor academic practice is often the result of inexperience or lack of knowledge and students who are found to have demonstrated poor academic practice will be provided with advice and support by UCEM. Concerns about academic misconduct will be considered under this procedure.

When investigating cases of academic misconduct, the burden of proof is on UCEM and UCEM will use the standard of proof based on the 'balance of probabilities' rather than 'beyond all reasonable doubt'. Evidence indicating that, on balance of probabilities, academic misconduct has occurred will be deemed sufficient evidence for action to be taken.

Where you have a declared disability UCEM will endeavour to ensure that information is available to you at all stages of the procedure in appropriate formats, and that any reasonable adjustments are made to the associated proceedings to accommodate your needs.

## 2. Scope

The procedure applies to all students registered on programmes or modules / units which lead to UCEM credit or award.

Should you withdraw part way through the process, prior to the final outcome, then the Dean of School may choose not to proceed with the investigation.

## 3. Types of academic misconduct

The following is a list of the types of academic misconduct that might occur it is not meant to be an exhaustive list and UCEM may investigate other types of academic misconduct as they occur.

**Plagiarism** – Is the fraudulent misrepresentation of the work of others – including ideas, arguments, words, diagrams, images and data – as one's own. This applies whatever the source e.g. UCEM study material, published books or documents, the Internet, the work of another student or company. It also includes the use of falsified referencing and misrepresenting secondary referencing.

**Self-plagiarism (or double submission)** – Is resubmitting previously submitted work on one or more occasions without proper acknowledgement for separate blocks of credit. It will not normally include work submitted for reassessment/retake within the same assessment.

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**Collusion** – Where two or more students submit a substantial amount of identical work in individual assignments each representing it as their own work, or knowingly allowing another student to copy one's own work.

**Contracting another to write a piece of assessed work or writing a piece of assessed work for another student** – This involves any means whereby a person does work (in whole or in part) on behalf of another which is submitted for assessment. It includes undertaking assessments for someone else by a fellow student, employer, employee, friend or family.

It also includes sitting an examination for someone else.

It includes information from 'cheat sites' or 'essay mills' or other sources.

**Falsification of data or making false declarations** – This includes where questionnaire results, interviews or other data are made up or altered.

It also includes making false declarations to obtain special examination or assessment arrangements.

**Bribery or attempting to influence UCEM staff** – You must not offer or give any member of UCEM staff money, gifts or any other advantage which is intended to induce or award impropriety in the marking and/or processing of your assessment.

This includes attempting to influence a marker or other UCEM official by writing additional notes on the assessment.

**Copying from, or communicating with, another examination candidate during an examination** – You must not communicate in any way with another student during an examination including during any periods of absence when the examination is in progress, must not disturb or distract other students, nor copy from them during an examination.

This includes aiding or attempting to aid another student or attempting to obtain such aid.

**Taking unauthorised material into an examination** – You must not take any unauthorised materials into the examination hall including permitted materials containing unauthorised or excessive annotation, and material held on electronic devices. You must not consult or attempt to consult any books, notes or material including those held electronically during the period of examination, this includes in the examination hall, and other areas candidates have access to, such as the toilets. It is not dependent on the actual use of, or an intention to use, any material or device that may have been taken into an examination.

**Ethical breaches** – You must ensure that research is conducted in an ethical and responsible manner. This includes ensuring that approval is granted before undertaking primary research and that data collected from participants is handled in an appropriate way.

## 4. Preventative measures against academic misconduct

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

### 4.1 Getting help from others / helping others

You are encouraged to discuss and share ideas and information but you are advised to put the ideas in your own words so that your submission is distinct from others. Those who assist others to commit academic misconduct will be subject to the same sanctions as those who use unfair means.

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You are personally responsible for ensuring that you protect your own work, submit yourself and do not allow others to use your work.

## 4.2 Referencing

If you are using work which has been produced by other people within an assignment you will need to ensure that you acknowledge or reference the source of the work. If poor referencing is extensive throughout a piece of work, it could appear that you are trying to claim credit for the work of others and you may be deemed to have committed plagiarism.

Guidance on referencing practice is available in the following guidance documents:

- UCEM Student Handbook, which is published on the VLE;
- The Induction Module on the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). All new students are required to complete the section 'Writing in your Own Words';
- Study skills resources on academic referencing and academic writing, UCEM Guide to Harvard Referencing and section 2 of 'Writing in your Own Words', which is published on the VLE.

In addition, you have access to the text matching software 'Turnitin' on the VLE, to use as a formative tool prior to the submission of coursework.

## 4.3 Good academic practice study skills support

You are encouraged to seek support if you need to improve your academic practice. You can access additional support via Student Central and being referred to an Academic Programme Support Tutor. Tailored support can be provided to address the areas that you are struggling with whether it is learning to reference correctly or learning to paraphrase and summarise in your own words.

If you demonstrate poor academic practice on an assessment you will be referred to the Academic Programme Support Tutor who will provide tailored Good Academic Practice Guidance.

## 4.4 What is Turnitin and how to interpret a Turnitin similarity report

Turnitin is a text-matching service which UCEM uses as a learning tool to help you see what text you may have copied verbatim and how much of the submission is cited and referenced correctly. Markers are also provided with a copy of your Turnitin report so that they can view this information they will however not only consider the similarity score but will interpret the report in full.

There is the following specific guidance provided on the VLE on how to interpret the 'similarity score' on the Turnitin text matching report:

- Student FAQs available in your module area of the VLE within the week you are due to prepare the coursework
- Turnitin guidance videos are also provided alongside the FAQs

### **5. Students studying a further education programme or taking their first year of an undergraduate programme**

If you are studying a further education programme (at level 3 and below) or studying on your first year of an undergraduate programme (this includes if you are joining the programme in the second year with exemption) we are mindful of the fact that you are learning to write in an academic style required for higher education level study. We appreciate that sometimes there is unintentional academic misconduct which is part of the learning process and we therefore take this into consideration when reviewing your submission.

You must however make every effort to use your time during this part of the programme to learn how to write in your own words and use appropriate referencing.

The above does not apply to collusion which will still be investigated and penalties applied so please be aware of this when writing your submissions with others.

### **6. How is suspected academic misconduct identified**

#### **6.1 Identification of suspected academic misconduct on coursework**

Academic misconduct may be identified by the marking tutor. In cases of plagiarism and collusion the marking tutor should highlight those passages which are unattributed or the same as another student's work and should indicate the extent of the plagiarism or collusion per question. Where there may be different forms of academic misconduct identified, for example plagiarism and collusion these must be highlighted.

Academic misconduct may also be identified by text-matching software. Text-matching software such as Turnitin is not used on its own as evidence of academic misconduct even if the proportion of matching text is high. Consideration will be given to whether original sources were referred to and the detail of the text matched, for example is it from multiple sources or were quotations used.

A finding of academic misconduct may be made even if there is an absence of matching text, for example where a student has changed certain words to avoid detection or has located a source that has not been uploaded to the text-matching software.

An investigation into academic misconduct may also be triggered where there are concerns about the authenticity of a student's work for example, they may have commissioned an assessment or asked a third party for assistance.

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## 6.2 Initial investigation

All cases of suspected academic misconduct are referred to the Programme Leader for initial consideration. The Programme Leader will make a judgement as to whether there is sufficient evidence to warrant further investigation.

If the Programme Leader determines that there is no case to answer the coursework is returned to you, and no record is placed on file. If the Programme Leader believes there is suspected academic misconduct, they will refer the case to the Academic Reviewer.

The Academic Reviewer will review the case and will decide whether to escalate the case to the Academic Misconduct Committee for a final decision. If the Academic Reviewer decides that there is no case to answer the assessment will be returned possibly with advice on how to improve academic conduct. Again, if it is determined that there is no case to answer no record will be put on the student record. However, if guidance is provided on improving academic conduct a note will be placed on your student file.

If the Academic Reviewer determines that there is a case, you will be provided with the opportunity to prepare a written statement in line with section 7 below.

Please see Appendix A to see a flow diagram of the process.

## 6.3 Identification of suspected academic misconduct in examinations

If you are suspected of academic misconduct immediately prior to the start of an examination, or during the examination, the Chief Invigilator will remove any evidence of written material that has been found and will put a mark in your script referencing the point and time at which material was confiscated. You will be permitted to complete the examination. The Chief Invigilator will provide details of the incident in the invigilator's report.

All cases of suspected academic misconduct will be referred to the Academic Misconduct Committee and you will be provided with the opportunity to prepare a written statement in line with section 7 below.

## 7. A student's right to reply

In the event of suspected academic misconduct you will receive notification in writing stating the nature of the suspected academic misconduct identified and the assessment affected. You will be provided with information about how the investigation will be conducted so that you can respond appropriately. Guidance is also issued on how to interpret a Turnitin similarity report.

You will be given an opportunity of a 'right to reply'. This will require you to prepare a written statement of no more than 1500 words to present any mitigating factors and any other evidence that would be useful for the investigation. You will be given fourteen days to prepare your response.

Where you choose not to provide a written statement the investigation will still proceed based on the evidence available.

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# 8. Academic Misconduct Committee

The Academic Misconduct Committee is convened when there are cases that need to be considered. Students are entitled to attend this meeting either in person or virtually to present their case and can also be accompanied. For students that choose not to attend their response to the right to reply will be fully considered.

All the evidence will be reviewed including the student's right to reply letter if received and a decision taken in line with the penalty sanctions see detailed section 9 below. The committee will consider both the severity and intent as well as the level of study and whether there are repeated offences.

The committee will consider the penalty required by working through the penalty scale starting at the least severe until they reach the appropriate penalty. The committee will not be informed of previous cases of academic misconduct until it is established whether there is a current charge.

For cases of collusion or where academic misconduct is related to group work, all linked cases will be considered at the same meeting Academic Misconduct Committee meeting and all students involved will have an opportunity to hear and respond to what the other students have raised.

Notification of the outcome following the committee's review will be provided in writing via Student Central. Alongside the outcome further guidance will be provided on how to avoid academic misconduct and the appeals process (see section 12 below).

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# 9. Penalties

## 9.1 Penalty matrix

	Extent and Significance	Intent To Deceive	Persistence of Misconduct	AMC PENALTY	Examples
<b>A: Major</b>	<p>Extensive inclusion of high volumes of source material without any citation or attribution.</p> <p>An extremely high Turnitin Similarity Index may be an indicator.</p> <p>Such a high score could apply to someone who is unaware/unable to demonstrate good academic practice.</p>	<p>Blatant, systematic and intentional misrepresentation / misuse of source information or data apparent.</p> <p>Blatant and intentional collusion with another student to use or share substantial work as part of an individual assessment.</p>	<p>Repeated acts of misconduct demonstrating a refusal to learn from previous advice or sanctions.</p>	<p><b>A1:</b> Student removed from course without eligibility for lesser award;</p> <p><b>A2:</b> Student removed from course but eligible for lesser award;</p> <p><b>A3:</b> Student failed in relevant modules, with right to resit and classification capped at a pass.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plagiarism which is substantial in extent or importance: for example, reproducing material, which amounts to three or more pages, from a source / sources without acknowledgement; or the substantial use of ideas and arguments of a source or sources which does not appear in the references or bibliography, where the context is such that it is presented as the student's own ideas.</li> <li>• Falsification of data which is substantial in extent or importance, including the principal data on which the results of a PG dissertation / thesis are based.</li> <li>• Impersonation or being impersonated.</li> <li>• Cheating in written examinations which is extensive or systematic. This includes making false declarations in order to gain an advantage (such as claiming extra time to complete an examination).</li> <li>• Commissioning someone else to write the assignment, including the use of online academic writing services.</li> <li>• Failure to obtain ethical approval prior to conducting research (obtaining evidence illegally)</li> <li>• Significant ethical breaches including conducting research without prior approval; not retaining personal data securely.</li> </ul>

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<p><b>B: Significant</b></p>	<p>Inclusion of significant volumes of source material without citation or attribution.</p> <p>A high Turnitin Similarity Index may be an indicator.</p>	<p>The intentional misrepresentation / misuse of source data or information apparent.</p> <p>Intentional collusion with another student to use or share work as part of an individual assessment.</p>	<p>Intermittent acts of misconduct demonstrating a failure to learn from previous advice or sanctions.</p>	<p><b>B1:</b> Student failed in module in which misconduct took place with right to repeat; <b>B2:</b> Student has mark reduced to zero for assessment in which misconduct took place with right to repeat;</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plagiarism which is significant in extent or importance: for example, the unattributed use of one or two substantial paragraphs.</li> <li>• Falsification of data which is significant in either extent or importance, including work where the data are the basis on which conclusions are derived and knowledge is claimed to be based.</li> <li>• Cheating in written examinations which may not be extensive. This includes making false declarations in order to gain an advantage (such as claiming extra time to complete an examination).</li> <li>• Collusion i.e. unauthorised collaboration on assessable written, oral or practical work with another person or persons.</li> </ul>
<p><b>C: Minor</b></p>	<p>Inclusion of source material without proper citation or attribution.</p> <p>A significant Turnitin Similarity Index may be an indicator.</p>	<p>The unintentional misrepresentation / misuse of source data or information apparent.</p> <p>Unintentional or accidental collusion with another student to use or share work as part of an individual assessment.</p>	<p>One-off act of misconduct demonstrating a failure to understand and apply proper referencing practice OR the student has previously received 'GAP' support for 'PAP'</p>	<p><b>C1:</b> Student has mark reduced to zero for specific question(s) / tasks in which misconduct took place with right to repeat;</p> <p><b>C2:</b> Student has mark reduced for assessment in which misconduct took place with right to repeat;</p> <p><b>C3:</b> Student has mark reduced for specific question(s) / tasks in which misconduct took</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plagiarism which is minor in extent or importance: for example, the unattributed use of a few sentences or a short paragraph.</li> <li>• Falsification of data which is minor in either extent or importance, for example data associated with demonstrating known practices. Any falsification of experimental data which are intended to or would normally be expected to generate knowledge, including those in a postgraduate or a final year undergraduate project, cannot be regarded as minor.</li> <li>• To include any/all of those listed in 'D. Marginal'</li> <li>• The use of another Author's ideas or concepts which have been intentionally included as though the student's own work but are actually the work of others. No references, including citations are given.</li> </ul>

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				place with right to repeat.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The student has submitted work which is either identical or closely related to the work and ideas of another assignment previously submitted by themselves (replication)</li> <li>Minor infringement of the <b>examination</b> venue rules (as set out in the conduct of examination rules)</li> <li>Communicating or trying to communicate, with another student or individual during an examination, or attempting to observe or copy another student's written <b>examination</b> script</li> <li>Taking unauthorized notes or devices into an <b>examination</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>D: Marginal (Poor Academic Practice) Further Education programmes at level 3 and below UG 1<sup>st</sup> year Modules (L4) and/or L5 entry students</b></p>	<p>Inclusion of some source material without proper citation or attribution.</p> <p>A low Turnitin Similarity Index. May be an indicator.</p> <p>This may not always be the case &amp; <b>could actually be a high score</b></p>	<p>No intention to misrepresent or misuse source data or information apparent.</p> <p>No Collusion with another student to use or share work as part of an individual assessment.</p>	<p>No previous history of academic misconduct</p> <p>Most likely unaware of good academic practice &amp; requires guidance</p>	<p><b>D1:</b> No penalty – Student sent advisory letter;</p> <p><b>D2:</b> No penalty – Student advised of no further action.</p> <p>Student advised of poor academic practice &amp; sent 'Good Academic Practice' support information, if applicable.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inconsistent, incorrect and/or incomplete referencing</li> <li>Direct copying of 'chunks' of text, with or without acknowledging the source</li> <li>Attempted but incorrect paraphrasing</li> <li>Unintentionally reproducing an existing concept or idea &amp; no reference provided</li> <li>Overuse of quotes and/or absence of quotation marks</li> <li>Failing to acknowledge that they have received help with writing the assignment accurately using the English Language.</li> </ul>

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## 9.2 Withdrawal of awards

UCEM reserves the right to withdraw and/or amend an award if evidence of academic misconduct becomes available after the conferment of that award.

## 10. Recording of academic misconduct

If you are deemed to have committed academic misconduct, this will be recorded on your academic record for that piece of assessment. This information will be made available to the Board of Examiners.

## 11. Monitoring, evaluation and review

An annual report on anonymised cases of academic misconduct will be compiled and reported to relevant UCEM deliberative committees.

## 12. Appeals

You have the right to appeal on a decision made with relation to academic misconduct. Details of the procedure and the grounds for appeal are set out in the Appeals procedure.

## 13. Related Policies

[Student Appeals Procedure](#)

[Student Complaints Procedure](#)

[Student Charter](#)

[Code of Practice Board of Examiners](#)

[UCEM Terms and Conditions of Contract](#)

[Data Protection Policy](#)

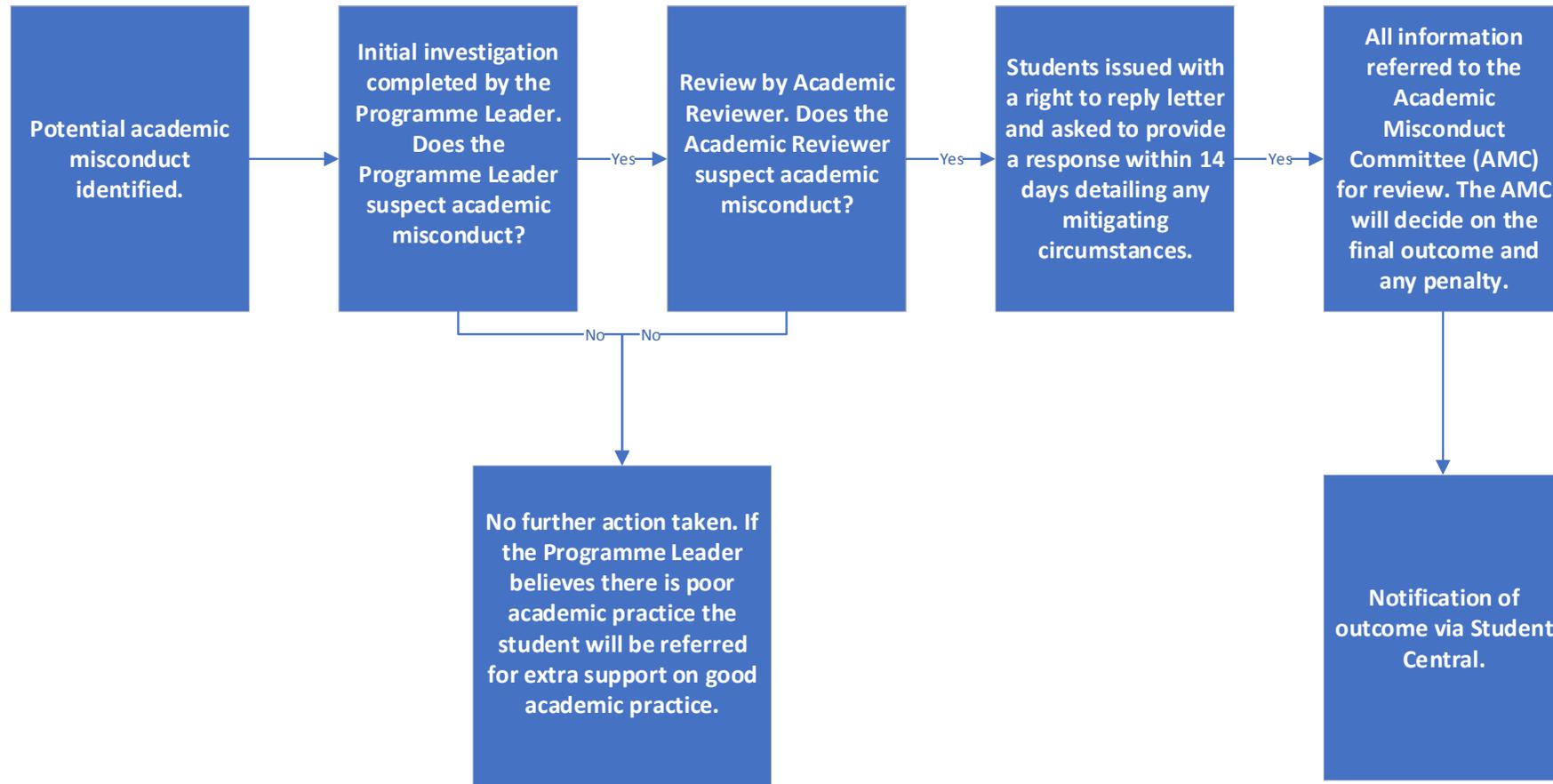
[Student Disciplinary Procedure](#)

[Disabilities and Additional Needs Procedure](#)

## Academic Misconduct Procedure

# Appendix A: Academic Misconduct Process Flow Diagram

### Course Work Assessments



# Academic Misconduct Procedure

## Examinations

