

APPENDIX D REGULATIONS GOVERNING SUSPECTED PLAGIARISM AND EXAMINATION OFFENCES APPROVED WITH EFFECT FROM 1 SEPTEMBER 2007

1. DEFINITIONS

1.1 **Plagiarism** includes, but is not limited to:

- i) using published work without referencing (the most common)
- ii) copying published work but with minor paraphrasing
- iii) copying coursework essays or allowing ones work to be copied
- iv) using work previously submitted for another award
- v) collaborating with any other person when the work is supposed to be individual
- vi) taking another person's computer file/program/designs/drawings
- vii) submitting another person's work as one's own
- viii) the use of unacknowledged material published on the web
- ix) purchase of model assignments from whatever source
- x) copying another student's results

1.2 **Examination offences** include but are not limited to attempts to deceive the examiners by:

- i) bringing unauthorised material into an examination, including material programmed into a calculator or other electronic devices
- ii) communicating with other persons during an examination
- iii) obtaining a copy of the examination paper in advance
- iv) persuading another person to sit the examination in one's place
- v) attempting to complete an exam by any other unfair means
- vi) copying another student's results
- vii) falsifying the results of practical activities

1.3 Examiners acting on behalf of the University may make legal and appropriate use of technology to prevent or detect cheating where this is possible.

1.4 Disruptive behaviour within an examination room will be dealt with under the University Disciplinary Regulations (or those of a collaborating partner)

2. **SCALE OF OFFENCES RELATING TO PLAGIARISM**

MINOR- normally restricted to those students in the early stages of their studies, but can be applied to students who inadequately reference, include a small amount of paraphrasing or very small amounts of unattributed or incorrectly attributed copying.

MODERATE- can be applied to students at any stage whose work contains significant lifting of text/material (verbatim) from a source or sources not correctly attributed or significant instances of unreferenced paraphrasing. This class of offence will also include collusion amongst students. This class of offence will also include the first repetition of a minor offence.

MAJOR - can be applied to students whose work contains sustained or repeated lifting of text (verbatim) from a source or sources not correctly attributed and/or sustained or repeated instances of unreferenced paraphrasing. Any repeat of a moderate offence will be constituted as major. Theft of another student's work, falsification /impersonation and purchasing of essays/external material will be a major offence.

3. PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH SUSPECTED OFFENCES

Reporting a suspected offence

- 3.1 If a tutor/invigilator thinks a student has committed plagiarism/an examination offence s/he impounds all the relevant material(s) and calls a witness to this. The tutor/invigilator and witness will receipt the material in detail, and hold it securely.
- 3.2 In cases of minor plagiarism (see 2 above) the marker of the assessment will convene a meeting with the student to provide an opportunity to discuss the nature of the work and those areas of academic convention in which the student needs to improve. The meeting will provide general feedback on the work and the REDUCED grade awarded. The student will be informed that they may appeal against this decision by requesting the convening of an Investigative Interview.
- 3.3 The School Academic Conduct Officer (or equivalent) will be informed and a warning letter sent to student with details of referral to study skills/on line resource. This letter to be kept on file as a means of identifying any repetition of offence.
- 3.4 In cases of examination offences, anything that may prevent the student legitimately completing the examination should not be impounded until the examination has been completed. The student will immediately be informed by the invigilator that an Investigative Interview will take place following the student's last examination in that assessment period.
- 3.5 In cases of moderate/major plagiarism offences and examination offences the tutor/invigilator makes a formal report (CP1) to the Head of Department responsible for the delivery of the course. Attached to the pro forma will be evidence. In cases of alleged plagiarism this would include the submitted coursework and other relevant information. In cases of examination offences, liaison with the University Examinations and Standards Office may be necessary to ensure that the Invigilators examination report, any unauthorised material/aids found in the student's possession, statements from any eyewitnesses and any other relevant information is collated.
- 3.6 The Head of Department or nominee co-ordinates the investigation. The School Quality Officer/Academic Conduct Officer will ascertain if the student had previously been the **subject of a prior warning**/an investigative interview/Assessment Offences Panel

Investigative Interview

- 3.7 On receiving the report of the alleged offence, the Head of Department (or nominee which could include the position of School Academic Conduct Officer) carries out an "investigative interview" with the student to ascertain whether an offence has been committed. The student shall be informed that she/he may contact the Students' Union for guidance and if s/he wishes, may be accompanied by a friend. The reason for the interview must be made clear to the student **in advance** i.e. to determine whether or not an offence has taken place. **As part of such notice, the student will receive a copy of the formal report (CP1).**

- 3.8 In order to safeguard the procedure, a member of staff not involved in the initial allegation will be in attendance. A careful record of the meeting will be kept. A report using the pro forma provided (CP2) must be made to the University Examination and Standards Officer and Student Records. If an offence is deemed to have been committed, it will be reported to the relevant, Progression and Award Board. The pro forma includes the details of the student, the details of the allegation and the outcome of the investigation, the action taken and what will be recorded on the student's file.
- 3.9 On completion of the investigative interview as described in 3.7 and 3.8 above, the Head of Department or nominee decides how to proceed.
- 3.10 If, during the investigative interview with the Head of Department or nominee, the student admits to committing an offence or **on the balance of probability** an offence is deemed to have been committed, the outcome will be an imposition of a penalty deemed appropriate to the offence (see section 5) and taking into account any previous assessment offences on the student record. **The penalty imposed is recorded onto Banner (AO Reason Code) and reported to the Progression and Award Board. To ensure consistency, University Collaborative Partners are advised to liaise with University Schools prior to the imposition of a penalty.**
- 3.11 There will be an opportunity to appeal to the Secretary of the Academic Appeals Committee against the outcome of the investigative Interview within **15** working days. Such appeals may only relate to the following grounds:
- (a) that the procedure was not properly carried out
 - (b) that substantial new evidence has come to light
- 3.12 Where the outcome of the investigative interview is inconclusive or the Head of Department or nominee thinks a severe offence has taken place the student will be informed that the circumstances will be investigated through an Assessment Offences Panel. The Head of Department or nominee notifies the School Quality Officer/Academic Conduct Officer who will inform the student in writing of the date of the Panel and also provide any supporting documentation.

Assessment Offences Panel

4.1 The Assessment Offences Panel consists of:

- the Head of School, or nominee, teaching the course concerned (Chair)
- a senior member of academic staff from another School ~~nominated from a Panel of Academic Council~~
- a subject Specialist (e.g. Course co-ordinator)
- the student's Programme Leader
- Students' Union representative

None should have been involved in detecting the alleged offence other than having been informed of it. In such cases an alternative Panel member will be secured. Witnesses (including witnesses on behalf of the student) may be called.

4.2 The School Quality Officer/Academic Conduct Officer will arrange for co-ordination and provision of secretarial support to the Assessment Offences Panel.

- 4.3 The student has the right to appear before the Panel and may be accompanied by a friend who may speak on his/her behalf. The friend may be from the Students' Union. If the student does not attend, the hearing may proceed in his/her absence. The Panel takes evidence from the Investigative Interview. This may involve attendance at the Assessment Offences Panel by the person who conducted the interview, in order to provide clarification. This person is not a member of the Panel and should not ask further questions of the student. The Panel also hears the student and his/her friend and any witnesses. The Panel decides whether, **on the balance of probability**, an offence has taken place, how serious the offence was, and imposes an appropriate penalty.
- 4.4 The appropriate pro forma (CP3) is completed as a formal record of the Assessment Offences Panel and a copy must be sent to the Examination and Standards Officer, Student Records and the next available Progression and Award Board. The pro forma includes the details of the student, the details of the allegation and the outcome of the Offence Panel, the action taken and what will be recorded on the student's file. **The penalty imposed is recorded onto Banner (AO Reason Code) and reported to the appropriate Progression and Award Board.**
- 4.5 There will be an opportunity to appeal to the Secretary of the Academic Appeals Committee against the outcome of the Academic Offences Panel within **15** working days. Such appeals may only relate to the following grounds:
- (a) that the procedure was not properly carried out
 - (b) that substantial new evidence has come to light

PENALTIES THAT MAY BE IMPOSED (see also section 2)

- 5.1 In considering its penalty the Investigative Interview/Assessment Offences Panel shall assess the seriousness of the offence using the following criteria:
- (a) **Pre-meditation** – an assessment offence that is deliberate or intended will be considered more serious than one which has arisen inadvertently, through mistake or ignorance
 - (b) **Scale** – an assessment offence that is substantial in scale (e.g. multiple offences in the same assessment period) will be considered more serious than one of lesser proportion.
 - (c) **Previous History** – an assessment offence that is carried out by a student with a previous history of assessment offences will be considered more serious than a first offence.
 - (d) **Theft or falsification** - an assessment offence involving the theft or falsification of work (from another student) will be considered more serious than one involving the authorised, but unattributed use of that other students work.
 - (e) **Effect on other students** - an assessment offence that has an adverse effect on the standing or well being of a fellow student will be considered more serious than an act that only affects the offender.

- (f) **Academic Level** – an assessment offence that is committed in a course that counts towards classification/award will be considered more serious than an offence where this is not at issue.
- (g) **Admission of Offence** – the penalty imposed will usually be lower down the scale if the student admits the offence at the first available opportunity
- (h) **Miscellaneous** – other relevant factors pertinent to individual cases, including extenuating circumstances may be taken into account in the determination of the penalty.

The University Examinations and Standards Officer will maintain a record (CP2 and CP3 forms) and will be available to advise on precedent and consistency of application across the University.

- 5.2 Where an investigative interview or an Assessment Offences Panel has found a student guilty of committing an offence, **ONLY** a penalty permitted from within the list below (see 5.4) can be applied.
- 5.3 Where it is deemed, **on the balance of probability**, that **a moderate/major plagiarism offence or an examination offence has occurred** the range of penalties that can be imposed are:

Dependent on the scale of offence

- (a) a Grade of 20 -39% will be awarded for component of assessment. No interim reassessment permitted. Grade attained through any subsequent reassessment of component will NOT be capped.

OR

- (b) Grade of 0% will be awarded for component of assessment. No interim reassessment permitted. Component reassessment will be capped at 40%

Penalties in (a) and (b) above will be applied, irrespective of whether the assessment regime has one or more than one assessment tasks.

- (c) Failure of overall course (0%), irrespective of grades gained for other components

The following penalties can only be imposed by Assessment Offences Panel

- (d) Failure of the stage of assessment with opportunity to repeat stage at a subsequent date. In this instance there will be no capping of repeat grades.
- (e) Failure of final stage with "ceiling" on classification which could be obtained on retrieval.
- (f) Recommendation to Vice-Chancellor to exclude and to withhold the award of any credits or lower level qualification to which the candidate may otherwise had been entitled.

(g) referral of student to a Fitness to Practice Panel (where appropriate)

5.4 SUMMARY OF SCALE OF OFFENCES, PERMITTED PENALTIES AND PROCESS

TYPE	RANGE OF PENALTIES	PROCESS
MINOR	Reduced grade allowed for component of assessment. Student referred to Study Skills/on-line resource. No interim reassessment permitted. A student may request a formal Investigative Interview if dissatisfied with this outcome.	Discussion with marker. School Academic Conduct Officer (or equivalent) informed and letter sent to student with details of referral to study skills/on line resource plus warning of repetition given.
MODERATE	Dependent on the scale of offence a Grade of 20 -39% will be awarded for component of assessment. No interim reassessment permitted. Grade attained through any subsequent reassessment of component will NOT be capped. OR Grade of 0% will be awarded for component of assessment. No interim reassessment permitted. Component reassessment will be capped at 40%	Investigative Interview carried out by Head of Department (or nominee) and CP2 forms completed and sent to Student Records & Examinations Office. AO Reason Code recorded against master CRN/component in Banner
MAJOR	Failure of overall course irrespective of grades gained for other components Failure of stage of assessment* Failure of final stage with ceiling placed on classification allowed on retrieval* Recommendation of Vice Chancellor to exclude student and withhold award/credits*	Investigative Interview and/or Assessment Offences Panel convened. CP1 and CP2 forms completed and sent to Student Records & Examinations Office. AO Reason Code recorded against master CRN/component in Banner. * can only be imposed by an Assessment Offences Panel.

ASSESSMENT OFFENCES PANEL – FOLLOW-UP

- 5.5 The Panel secretary will inform the student in writing of the Panel's decision, within 10 working days of the meeting. The University Examinations and Standards Officer should be consulted where the penalty imposed is a recommendation to the Vice-Chancellor to exclude and withhold the award.
- 5.6 The appropriate pro forma (CP3) is used and a copy submitted to the Examinations and Standards Officer, Student Records and the next available Progression and Award Board. The pro forma may be made available to appropriate external and internal examiners.
- 5.7 The student may appeal to the Academic Appeals Committee, normally only on the grounds that the procedure has not been properly carried out, or that substantial new evidence has come to light. The appeal must be made in writing, within **15** working days of the date of the letter giving the Panel's decision. No appeal would

be allowed against the severity of the punishment. Further information on the Academic Appeals Committee can be found in the Academic Appeals Regulations.

6. ABSENCE OF STUDENT

- 6.1 If a student suspected of an offence of plagiarism is absent (e.g. abroad) at any stage of the process of investigation or for a hearing of the Assessment Offences Panel, the Chair will decide whether the process may be delayed until the student is available. In cases where the student is not able to attend the University within a reasonable period of time, the process of investigation/hearing may proceed in his/her absence, but an opportunity must be provided for the student to put their case through the submission of a written statement.

7. CASES OF MULTIPLE OFFENDERS

- 7.1 Instances will occur where groups of students are suspected of plagiarism and it may not be practicable to use the investigative interview to gauge the students knowledge and ascertain that the person who claims to be the author of an assignment, actually is the author. Instances will occur where one or more students are involved in an examination offence
- 7.2 In these cases students may be contacted by letter by the Head of Department. The letter should give details of the alleged offence and offer each student the opportunity to confirm or deny committing the offence. The student should be informed that she/he may contact the Students' Union or Student Affairs for guidance.
- 7.3 If, in responding the students admit to the offence, the penalty imposed will be one of those available from 5.3 above and will be specified in a letter of reply.
- 7.4 Where students deny committing the alleged offence, an Assessment Offences Panel will be convened.
- 7.5 The appropriate pro forma (CP2) is used which includes the details of the student, the details of the allegation and the outcome of the investigation, the action taken and what will be recorded on the student's file.

REPORTING A SUSPECTED OFFENCE (CP1)

Name of Student		
Student ID Number		
Student's Programme of Study		
Student's School		
Academic Session		
Course Title		
Course Code		
Course Reference Number(s) – CRN		
Details of Allegation		
Relevant Evidence/Materials impounded		
Signature of tutor/invigator (<i>please specify</i>)		Date
Signature of Staff Witness (for examination offences)		Date

INVESTIGATIVE INTERVIEW (CP2)

Name of Student	
Student ID Number	
Student's Programme of Study	
Student's School	
Academic Session	
Course Title	
Course Code	
Course Reference Number(s) – CRN	
Date of Investigative Interview	
Name of Head of Department (or nominee)	
Name of Independent Member of Staff	
Details of any witnesses <i>(to include witnesses on behalf of the student)</i>	
Details of the allegation	

Outcome of Investigative Interview

Details of any Penalty to be Imposed

Refer to Assessment Offences Panel **YES/NO**

Signature of Head of Department or nominee		Date
Signature of Independent Member of Staff		Date
<i>Copies of Report to</i>	<i>University Examinations & Standards Officer Student Records (to be recorded onto Banner) Progression and Award Board Student file</i>	<i>Date</i>

ASSESSMENT OFFENCES PANEL (CP3)

Name of Student	
Student ID Number	
Student's Programme of Study	
Student's School	
Academic Session	
Course Title	
Course Code	
Course Reference Number	
Date of Assessment Offences Panel	
Panel Membership	
Details of any witnesses (to include witnesses on behalf of the student)	
Details of the allegation (to also include any materials impounded)	

Outcome of Investigative Interview

Outcome of the Assessment Offences Panel

Details of any Penalty to be Imposed

Signature of Chair		Date
Copies of Report to	<i>University Examinations & Standards Officer Student Records (to be recorded onto Banner) Progression and Award Board Student file</i>	<i>Date</i>

