

Assessment Misconduct Procedure for Taught Programmes

effective from the 2022-23 academic year

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Summary/Description:	
This document details the clearly formulated and impartial process for dealing with allegations relating to assessment misconduct on taught programmes of study.	

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1. PRINCIPLES

- 1.1 Academic achievement at the University of Greenwich is based on values of academic integrity, honesty and trust. Students are expected to take responsibility for the integrity of their own work, including asking for clarification where necessary.
- 1.2 Any improper activity or behaviour by a student which may give that student, or another student, an academic advantage in assessment is considered to be assessment misconduct. Allegations of assessment misconduct will be considered under this Procedure and may result in a penalty being imposed.
- 1.3 The standard of proof applied in operating this procedure is the balance of probabilities. This means the investigation needs only to conclude that it is likely that misconduct occurred, rather than requiring that the evidence be indisputable that misconduct has occurred. Decisions must be supported by a rationale and evidence. The burden lies on the university to show, on the balance of probabilities, that the acts constituting the alleged assessment misconduct occurred.
- 1.4 All timescales referred to in this document are measured in 'calendar days' which means every day of the week including Saturdays and Sundays, except for university closure days such as public holidays and Christmas closures. Full details of term dates and university closures can be found here <https://docs.gre.ac.uk/rep/sas/term-dates>
- 1.5 Students are expected to keep to the deadlines within this procedure unless compelling independent evidence is provided to show why deadlines could not be met. The University is also expected to meet our deadlines but there will occasionally be times when we are unable to do so for good reason. If so, the student will be given the reasons and kept informed of progress.

2. SCOPE

- 2.1 This Procedure is applicable to all students of the University on a taught programme of study and to former students. Separate procedures exist for the consideration of Postgraduate research assessment misconduct.
- 2.2 The University's Fitness to Practise procedures may also be applied to students on programmes of study which lead to a professional registration and whose actions are considered under this Procedure.

3. DEFINITIONS

- 3.1 Assessment misconduct includes but is not limited to:
 - Attempting to complete any assessment by unfair means;
 - Using published work without appropriate referencing;
 - Copying the coursework or time-constrained assessment/examination of another;
 - Allowing coursework to be used or copied;

- Re-using work previously submitted for another course or programme of study;
- Submitting or using another person's work as your own, e.g. computer file/program/design/drawings/results;
- Falsifying the results of practical activities;
- Purchase, or evidence of the intention to purchase, material from a third party to use in full or in part in any form of assessed work whether or not that material is used in assessed work;
- The supply of material for purchase by another student, whether or not that material is used in assessed work;
- Bringing unauthorised material into a time-constrained assessment/examination, including material programmed into a calculator and/or other electronic device;
- Communicating with another person or persons during a time-constrained assessment/examination by any means, including electronic devices;
- Obtaining a copy of an unseen examination paper and/or answers in advance;
- Permitting another person to sit a time-constrained assessment/examination in one's place;
- Sitting a time-constrained assessment/examination for another;
- Breaching the instructions set with regard to your conduct before, during or after an examination
- Violations of the Ethics Policy

3.2 Disruptive behaviour where a time-constrained assessment/examination is taking place will be dealt with under the Student Disciplinary Procedures (or those of a collaborating partner).

3.3 The University may make legal and appropriate use of technology to prevent or detect assessment misconduct.

4. GUIDANCE ON THE SCALE OF OFFENCES

4.1 **Category 1 Offence** - Normally applies to students in the early stages of their studies at the University and normally relates to students who inadequately reference.

4.2 **Category 2 Offence** - Relates to all forms of assessment and can apply to students at any stage of their studies. Normally applies where:

- work evidences copying and/or use of unattributed material;
- there is collusion amongst students;
- there is a repetition of a Category 1 Offence.

4.3 **Category 3 Offence** - Relates to all forms of assessment and can apply to students at any stage of their studies and to former students. Normally applies to:

- work evidencing extensive and/or repeated copying or use of unattributed material;
- theft of another student's work;
- falsification of results;

- impersonation;
- the commissioning and/or purchase or evidence of the intention to purchase material for use in any form of assessment;
- assessment misconduct during a time-constrained assessment/examination;
- repetition of a Category 1 or Category 2 Offence.

5. REPORTING A SUSPECTED OFFENCE

- 5.1 In the case of a time-constrained assessment/examination, the invigilator will call a witness to confirm the chain of evidence. Anything that may prevent the student legitimately completing the assessment/examination should not be impounded until the assessment/examination has been completed. The invigilator will advise the student that the matter will be reported and will complete a CP1.
- 5.2 For all other assessments, if the assessor thinks that a student has committed an assessment offence, they must make all reasonable efforts to preserve and retain evidence securely and will complete a CP1.
- 5.3 When considering a suspected offence, the Faculty Academic Conduct Officer (FACO) may review any earlier proven offences and consider whether they are relevant to the current case. Where it is deemed relevant, the investigation will take this into account. Where any earlier proven offences are not deemed relevant to the current case, a different level of penalty may still be required if the current case against the student is upheld.

6. CATEGORY 1 OFFENCES

- 6.1 In the case of an alleged Category 1 Offence, the assessor 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 guidance on avoiding future allegations of assessment misconduct, including referral to academic skills support.
- 6.2 The assessor will determine an appropriate penalty having regard to the Scale of Penalties (Section 10) for a Category 1 Offence. A CP1 will be completed.
- 6.3 On receipt of the CP1 the Faculty Academic Conduct Officer (FACO) may determine whether any previous upheld allegations of assessment misconduct are relevant to the case under consideration. For example, where a student has previously been penalised for poor academic practice, this may be considered relevant to a current suspected case of plagiarism.
- 6.5 Following the investigation and review of relevant information, a revised penalty may be applied or the case may be considered under a higher category. The FACO will update the CP1 explaining clearly the reasons for the revised outcome.
- 6.6 The student will be informed in writing of the outcome of the meeting within 7 calendar days. A CP1 will be completed and copied to the student and the student's personal tutor. A copy of the CP1 will be retained.

6.7 The student will be informed that they may request a review of the outcome by the convening of an Investigative Interview. The student may request a review of the outcome on the following grounds only:

- a) That there has been demonstrable material procedural irregularity in the conduct of the assessment misconduct investigation and procedure, and/or
- b) That substantial new evidence has come to light.

7. INVESTIGATIVE INTERVIEW – CATEGORY 2 AND CATEGORY 3 OFFENCES

7.1 In cases of an alleged Category 2 or Category 3 Offence, a CP1 will be completed by the assessor / invigilator and forwarded to a Faculty Academic Conduct Officer. In such cases, the CP1 will be accompanied by evidence or a link to the evidence.

7.2 On receiving a CP1, a Faculty Academic Conduct Officer will coordinate the investigation and will initially ascertain if the student has a concurrent allegation of assessment misconduct. If there are any cases that have occurred concurrently, such that the outcome of an earlier case has not been formally communicated to the student before they committed a further offence, then they will normally be considered as part of the same case.

7.3 A Faculty Academic Conduct Officer will arrange to carry out an Investigative Interview with the student to ascertain whether an offence has been committed. Attendees at the Investigative Interview meeting:

- A Faculty Academic Conduct Officer (Chair)
- Another member of staff not involved in the allegation
- The student
- The student's friend/SU adviser/supporter (optional)
- Notetaker (optional)

The student will be provided with 7 calendar days' notice of the meeting and informed that they may contact the Students' Union for guidance and may be accompanied by a friend/SU adviser/supporter at the Investigative Interview. The friend/SU adviser/supporter shall not present a conflict of interest and will not be a legal representative. The friend/SU adviser/supporter should not answer questions on behalf of the student but may make representations, ask questions and provide advice to the student.

The reason for the Investigative Interview must be made clear to the student in advance and the student will receive a copy of the CP1 and all relevant evidence.

7.4 A report of the Investigative Interview using the CP2 must be completed.

7.5 If the student does not attend the Investigative Interview, the meeting may take place in their absence. If the student is unable to attend the Investigative Interview, they may make a written representation to the Faculty Academic Conduct Officer which will be considered during the Investigative Interview.

- 7.6 If, during the Investigative Interview, 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 either the imposition of an appropriate penalty having regard to the Scale of Penalties (Section 10) for a Category 1 or Category 2 Offence, or referral to an Assessment Offences Panel (Category 3 Offence). Where the outcome of the Investigative Interview is inconclusive, the matter will be referred to an Assessment Offences Panel for further consideration.
- 7.7 The Faculty Academic Conduct Officer (FACO) may determine whether any previous upheld allegations of assessment misconduct are relevant to the case under consideration. For example, the fact that a student has previously been penalised for poor academic practice may be relevant to whether they have committed plagiarism. Where it is considered that a previous upheld allegation is relevant, the CP2 will include a clear explanation of the relevance and its impact on the outcome.
- 7.8 A copy of the CP2 report will be sent to the student and to the student's personal tutor within 7 calendar days. The Student Records Service (SRS) will be instructed to be record the outcome against the student record in Banner.
- 7.9 The student will be informed in writing of the outcome of the Investigative Interview meeting within 7 calendar days of the meeting. The student will also be informed that they may request a review of the outcome by the convening of an Assessment Offences Panel. The student may request a review of the outcome of an Investigative Interview on the following grounds only:
- a) That there has been demonstrable material procedural irregularity in the conduct of the assessment misconduct investigation and procedure, and/or
 - b) That substantial new evidence has come to light.
- 7.10 Where an offence has been proven, the student may be referred to the University's Fitness to Practise Procedure if they are registered on a programme of study which leads to professional registration.

8. ASSESSMENT OFFENCES PANEL

- 8.1 Where a student has been referred to an Assessment Offences Panel, the Faculty will convene the Panel meeting.
- 8.2 An Assessment Offences Panel will comprise:
- A senior member of Faculty staff (Chair)
 - A senior member of academic staff not from the student's School
 - A subject specialist
 - A representative nominated by the Students' Union

No member of the Assessment Offences Panel should have been involved in detecting or investigating the alleged assessment offence. A written record of the proceedings of the Assessment Offences Panel will be made and a report of the Assessment Offences Panel meeting using the CP3 must be completed. The Faculty will arrange for a notetaker to be present.

- 8.3 A student has the right to appear before an Assessment Offences Panel and must be given at least 7 calendar days' notice of the date and time of the Assessment Offences Panel meeting. The reason for the Assessment Offences Panel meeting must be made clear to the student in advance and the student will receive a copy of the CP2 and all relevant evidence.

The student shall be informed that they may contact the Students' Union for guidance and may be accompanied by a friend/SU adviser/supporter at the Assessment Offences Panel meeting. The friend/SU adviser/supporter shall not present a conflict of interest and will not be a legal representative. The friend/SU adviser/supporter should not answer questions on behalf of the student but may make representations, ask questions and provide advice to the student.

- 8.4 If the student does not wish to or is unable to attend the Assessment Offences Panel, the meeting and a consideration of the evidence may take place in their absence. If the student is unable to attend the meeting, they may make a written representation to the Assessment Offences Panel at least 4 calendar days in advance which will be considered during the meeting.

- 8.5 The Assessment Offences Panel will consider all evidence, including evidence from the Investigative Interview. The Faculty Academic Conduct Officer who conducted the Investigative Interview will present the case and provide clarification to the Assessment Offences Panel but may not ask further questions of the student. The Assessment Offences Panel will provide the student with the opportunity to respond to the allegation.

Witnesses to the alleged offence may be called. Details of any witness should be submitted to the Chair of the Assessment Offences Panel no less than four calendar days before the Panel meeting.

- 8.6 If, during the Assessment Offences Panel meeting, 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 the imposition of an appropriate penalty. The Assessment Offences Panel will have regard to the Scale of Penalties (Section 10) and circumstances of the offence when determining a penalty.

- 8.7 A copy of the CP3 report will be sent to the student within seven calendar days. A record of the CP3 will be retained. The student will be informed in writing of the outcome of the Assessment Offences Panel meeting and will also be informed that they may appeal against the outcome under the University's Academic Appeals Policy and Procedure.

A copy of the CP3 report will be sent to the student's personal tutor and the Student Records Service (SRS) will be instructed to record the outcome against the student record.

- 8.8 Where an offence has been proven, the student may be referred to the University's Fitness to Practise Procedure if they are registered to a programme of study which leads to professional registration.

- 8.9 The University Academic Registry will be informed where the Assessment Offences Panel has imposed a penalty at Level 7, 8 or 9 (see Section 10.0 Scale of Penalties below).

9. COLLABORATIVE ARRANGEMENTS

Partners will be expected to undertake the procedures set out in Sections 6 and 7. Copies of CP2 forms will be forwarded to the FACO for review and final confirmation.

10. SCALE OF PENALTIES

- 10.1 No penalty, other than those listed in the Scale of Penalties in Appendix A may be applied.
- 10.2 The nature of individual cases, including evidenced extenuating circumstances, will be taken into account when considering an appropriate penalty.
- 10.3 The penalty imposed may take account of any admission of an offence by a student.

11. FACULTY ACADEMIC CONDUCT OFFICER (FACO)

A FACO will be a member of academic staff with a good understanding of the range and scope of assessment offences and a commitment to academic standards.

A FACO is expected to:

1. Be a point of contact and advice for all issues relating to assessment misconduct.
2. Maintain the records of all assessment offence (AO) cases.
3. Arrange and chair Investigative Interviews.
4. Complete the CP2 and send copies to relevant parties.
5. In the case of an Assessment Offences Panel (AOP):
 - a) Request that an AOP be set up by the Faculty
 - b) Provide the CP2 and relevant evidence
 - c) Present cases to the AOP

12. ADVICE AND SUPPORT

Free independent advice and advocacy is available from the Greenwich Students' Union:

Email: suadvice@gre.ac.uk

Web: <https://www.greenwichsu.co.uk/advice>

Online contact form: www.greenwichsu.co.uk/advice/triageform

For students at Medway, please visit: www.greenwichsu.co.uk/medway/advice

APPENDIX A

Level	Guidance on assessing the seriousness of an offence	Category of Offence	Penalty	Authority awarding penalty	Records
1.	Early stage of studies; inadequate referencing due to mistake or ignorance and no previous history of alleged offences.	Category 1	No penalty – advice provided to student in feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessor • Investigative Interview • Assessment Offences Panel 	CP1
2.		Category 1	Grade reduced for the component of assessment by 10 percentage points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessor • Investigative Interview • Assessment Offences Panel 	CP1
3.	All forms of assessment; any stage of studies.	Category 2	Grade reduced for the component of assessment by 20 percentage points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigative Interview • Assessment Offences Panel 	CP1 & CP2
4.	Significant copying and/or unattributed material; collusion amongst students; evidence of pre-meditation; repetition of a Category 1 Offence	Category 2	A grade of zero imposed at component of assessment level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigative Interview • Assessment Offences Panel 	CP1 & CP2
5.		Category 2	Failure of course overall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigative Interview • Assessment Offences Panel 	CP1, CP2 & CP3
6.	All forms of assessment; any stage of studies.	Category 3	Failure of Stage of study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment Offences Panel 	CP1, CP2 & CP3
7.	Extensive and/or repeated copying or use of unattributed material; evidence of pre-meditation; theft of another student's work; falsification of results; impersonation; evidence of the commissioning and/or purchase or evidence of the intention to purchase material for use in any form of assessment; misconduct during a time-constrained assessment; repetition of a Category 1 or Category 2 Offence.	Category 3	Recommendation to V-C that student is withdrawn with an Exit Award	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment Offences Panel • V-C 	CP1, CP2 & CP3
8.		Category 3	Recommendation to V-C that student is withdrawn with no Exit Award or award of credit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment Offences Panel • V-C 	CP1, CP2 & CP3
9.		Category 3	Recommendation to V-C that award is rescinded (where already conferred)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment Offences Panel • V-C 	CP1, CP2 & CP3