



BISHOP GROSSETESTE UNIVERSITY

Document Administration

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## Introduction

1. The Code of Practice on Academic Misconduct provides definitions for the identification of academic misconduct; a sequence of actions for the investigation of alleged misconduct; and guidelines for the application of penalties in confirmed cases.
2. The University's Code of Practice seeks to follow the precepts and guidance contained in the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) *UK Quality Code for Higher Education*, specifically *Chapter B6 – Assessment of students and the recognition of prior learning [2013] (2015)*, which requires operation of 'processes for preventing, identifying, investigating and responding to unacceptable academic practice' (Indicator 14).

## Definitions of Academic Misconduct

3. Academic misconduct is any intentional or reckless conduct by a student, or students, with the aim of gaining an unfair advantage or benefit, or causing an unfair disadvantage or loss to another student, or students, in pursuit of an academic qualification at the University. It includes conduct which is an attempt to gain such an advantage or to disadvantage over another student or students, whether successful or not.
4. The context for academic misconduct may be a formal examination, piece of coursework, assessed placement, performance, presentation, experimental work or experiments and their results, computer programmes, or any assessment taken by a student in pursuit of an academic qualification at the University.
5. The unacknowledged incorporation in a student's work of material derived from the work, published or unpublished, of another person constitutes plagiarism. Assignments presented as collaborative group assessments, which include the work of others that has not been acknowledged, are plagiarised.

Specific examples of plagiarism might include:

- the inclusion in a student's work of a phrase or a longer piece of text from another person's work without the use of quotation marks and acknowledgement of the source;
  - the summarising of another person's work by simply changing a few words or altering the order of presentation, without acknowledgement;
  - the use of the ideas of another person without acknowledgement of the source;
  - copying the work of another student, with or without their knowledge or agreement;
  - the submitting of work which the student has submitted previously at BGU or another university, in whole or in part (this is known as self-plagiarism).
6. Cheating in an examination occurs when a student uses materials or equipment prohibited in the examination room, or passes off the work of another person as their own for examination assessment. Students using published materials or prohibited equipment, or who are



contravening the regulations or directions for coursework, placement, performance or presentation assessments, are also examples of someone cheating.

7. Collusion occurs where a student submits, with the intent to gain unfair advantage, work which has been done in collaboration with another person as entirely their own. Collusion also occurs where a student collaborates with another student in the completion of work which is intended to be submitted as that other student's unaided work.
8. Falsifying results of laboratory or field work, or other forms of research evidence and data collection for the completion of an assignment constitutes cheating.
9. Impersonation of another student (candidate) during an examination, or for a coursework assessment or other assessed event also involves cheating.
10. Conspiring with another person or persons to complete the work of the candidate or replace the candidate in an examination or other event is also an example of academic misconduct.
11. Making false statements or using false evidence to defer an assessment, withdraw from an examination, or seek an extension to an assessment involves cheating.
12. Falsifying or destroying documents, transcripts, certificates, awards, or other official documents for admission, registration or qualification constitutes academic misconduct; and so does making false statements to gain admission, registration or qualification.
13. Deliberate misrepresentation of material written or created by others involves cheating.
14. Using racist ideas and language in assessed work unless clearly identified as necessary in the research for a topic or outcome will also be regarded as academic misconduct by the University.

NB: The above list is not exhaustive.

#### **Procedure for the Investigation and Determination of Allegations of Academic Misconduct**

15. The module tutor or marker will inform the appropriate Academic Coordinator and Head of School of a suspected case of misconduct.
16. The Academic Coordinator, together with the tutor concerned, will write to the student explaining the nature of the allegation and require him or her to attend an informal meeting (in cases where the Academic Coordinator is the module tutor or marker, another member of the programme team will attend the meeting alongside the Academic Coordinator). The Academic Coordinator will present the evidence to the student and invite them to comment. At the conclusion of the meeting, the Academic Coordinator and module tutor or marker will review the evidence to determine whether a case has been established. In cases involving more than one student it shall be for the Academic Coordinator to decide whether they should be interviewed together or separately.



17. If the staff attending the meeting decide that the student has provided a satisfactory explanation of the circumstances and that there is no case to answer, they will advise the Head of School who will write to the student indicating that the matter is closed.
18. If the members of staff attending the meeting determine that a case of academic misconduct has been established, they will consider whether there are grounds for believing that it has been committed inadvertently (careful thought should be given to the case of first-year students since the early period of a student's registration should be regarded as developmental for the purpose of instilling good academic practices). In those cases where it is decided that the alleged offence is inadvertent, the Academic Coordinator will advise the Head of School who will issue a formal warning to the student. The student is also required to attend a session with a member of academic staff (e.g. their personal tutor) to discuss how they can avoid academic misconduct in the future. The letter should make it clear that any future case of alleged academic misconduct by the student will be deemed deliberate. A copy of the formal warning will be placed on the student's file. A formal warning may also be issued in cases where it is suspected that a deliberate offence has taken place but there is insufficient proof to proceed further.
19. Where it is determined that a case of deliberate academic misconduct has been established, the Academic Coordinator will advise the Head of School accordingly. The Head of School will inform the student in writing of the outcome indicating that the matter will now be the subject of a formal investigation. It is important to make clear that, at this stage, the allegations have not yet been substantiated. The Head of School will write to the Student Administration Manager enclosing copies of any evidence relating to the case.
20. The Student Administration Manager will:
  - i) Inform the student of the allegation in writing and invite the student to respond in writing within ten working days, admitting or denying the allegation. This period may be shorter than 10 days if the Board of Examiners is due to meet within that time period.
  - ii) Arrange for an Adjudicating Panel to be established consisting of three members of academic staff unconnected with the student's programme, one of whom shall be a senior member of the University who shall act as Chair.
  - iii) Inform the student of the date and venue of the hearing within two days of the end of the ten-day response period (or a shorter period of time; see i).
  - iv) Advise the student that they have the right to be heard in person and be accompanied at the Panel meeting by a friend, who may be a member of staff or a student of the University but who is not a parent or a legal representative. The student may claim deferment of the meeting as a result of extenuating circumstances (supported by appropriate evidence).
  - v) The Panel shall proceed with or without the attendance of the student concerned, unless the student has established a claim for extenuating circumstances which warrants a deferment of the meeting.



### Procedures for the Adjudicating Panel

21. Procedures for the Adjudicating Panel are as follows:

- i) The Panel may call witnesses, interview persons associated with the case, and ask for further evidence.
- ii) The Panel will make a judgement when it is satisfied that it has examined sufficient evidence.
- iii) The Panel will make its judgement in private on whether the allegation of misconduct is proven or not.
- iv) The Panel meeting will be minuted and the minutes made available to the Board of Examiners.

22. Where more than one student is accused of the same offence, it will be for the Chair of the Panel to determine whether they should be interviewed separately or together.

### Penalties

23. The Adjudicating Panel may impose one of the following penalties:

- i) Mark of zero to be recorded for the item of assessment under review, right of retrieval to be retained for two retrieval opportunities.
- ii) Mark of zero to be recorded for the item of assessment under review, right of retrieval to be retained for one retrieval opportunity only.
- iii) Mark of zero to be recorded for all items of assessment for the module, right of retrieval to be retained for one opportunity only.
- iv) Mark of zero to be recorded for all items of assessment for the module, right of retrieval to be withdrawn for the existing academic year, but the student may retrieve the module in the following academic year on payment of the appropriate fee.
- v) Mark of zero to be recorded for all items of assessment for the module, right of retrieval to be withdrawn (not be used where module failure prevents progression; i.e. only to be used for final year students if the module is not an optional one).
- v) Mark of zero to be recorded for all modules at that level, right of retrieval to be retained i.e. the student must repeat that stage or level.
- vi) Mark of zero to be recorded for all modules at that level, withdrawal of all rights to retrieval and the student's registration terminated.

24. Penalties i to vi will include the addition of a formal or final warning to the student(s) record.



25. The adjudicating panel will be required to exercise judgment in each case on the severity of the penalty, taking into consideration the circumstances of the misconduct, whether more than one student was involved, whether previous misconduct had taken place and the level of the programme on which the student is registered. Panel members should be aware of the consequences of any penalty on the student's progression on the programme; this could include funding.

### Notification

26. The student concerned will be notified by letter, to the relevant address, of the decision of the Adjudication Panel. The letter will be posted no later than five working days after the meeting of the Adjudication Panel.

### Appeals

27. Students may appeal against the Panel decision; the appeal must be received by QASD within 20 working days of the notification of the result to the student.
28. A student may appeal a decision on the following grounds:
- A review of the procedures followed at the formal stage
  - A consideration of whether the outcome was reasonable in all the circumstances
  - New material evidence which the student was unable, for valid reasons, to provide earlier in the process
29. Upon receipt of the appeal, the Registrar and Secretary<sup>1</sup> will consider whether the request for the appeal falls within scope of the grounds in paragraph 28. The Registrar and Secretary will normally respond to the student within five working days, to confirm receipt and inform the student whether the University will conduct a review.
30. If the Registrar and Secretary does not consider the appeal to be in scope, then the response will also include a Completion of Procedures letter and the student will be informed of their right to contact the OIA should they remain dissatisfied, including the grounds on which they may do so.
31. If the Registrar and Secretary considers the appeal to be in scope, then the Registrar and Secretary will choose from the following courses of action:
- Conducting a review of the case
  - Requesting that a senior academic member of staff with no prior involvement of the case conducts the review
  - In exceptional circumstances, convening a new panel to consider the case afresh
32. It is not usually necessary to convene a new panel to consider the case afresh. This course of

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<sup>1</sup> For the purpose of these procedures, a nominated member of staff may act on behalf of the Registrar and Secretary if he/she is unavailable.



action is available, however, and in such cases the procedures outlined under paragraphs 20–21 will be followed. The Panel will be Chaired by the Registrar and Secretary or a nominated representative.

33. Following the completion of the review, the Registrar and Secretary will write to the student, informing them of the outcome.
34. The outcome of the Review stage represents the final stage of the University's internal procedures. The student will be issued with a completion of procedures letter by QASD within 28 days of the conclusion of the Review. If the student remains dissatisfied, they will be directed to pursue the matter through the procedures of the Office of the Independent Adjudicator. Details may be found on the OIA website <http://www.oiahe.org.uk> or from:

OIA  
Second Floor  
Abbey Gate  
57 – 75 Kings Road  
READING  
RG1 3AA

#### **Collaborative Provision**

35. Franchised partner institutions will abide by this code. Non-franchised partner institutions are expected to have a procedure for academic misconduct that is equivalent to that of the University.