The University of Manchester

Academic Malpractice Procedure[1]

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1. Introduction

1.1. Paragraph 2(r) of Regulation XVII (Conduct and Discipline of Students) (the "**Regulation**") defines academic malpractice as a type of misconduct which can be subject to the University's disciplinary processes.

2. Academic integrity[2]

2.1. Academic integrity means honesty and responsibility in scholarship. Assessments exist to help students learn; grades exist to show how fully this goal is attained. Therefore all work and all grades should result from a student's own understanding and effort. Academic integrity involves values such as avoidance of cheating or plagiarism; maintenance of academic standards; honesty and rigor in research and academic publishing.

2.2. It is the responsibility of the University and its constituent parts to ensure that all students understand the academic requirements expected of them. As a minimum students should be made aware of academic integrity and academic malpractice through handbooks and online resources. In particular this Procedure should be available to students. These responsibilities should be balanced against those of the students who must clearly indicate any lack of understanding concerning academic malpractice and must engage with the resources made available on this subject.

2.3. It is good practice for academic integrity to be highlighted to students throughout their programme and for students to be given the opportunity to think critically, to reflect, construct and revise arguments and to proof-read.

2.4. In relation to the use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI), some general uses of AI may permissible (such as for spellcheck and revision) but, in relation to more specific uses, students must ensure that this does not contravene the definitions of academic malpractice set out below. Programmes can identify further boundaries or allowances of AI usage based on their assessment needs but must make these clear to students. The University's

[1] Any reference in this Procedure to a named officer should also be read as a reference to their delegated nominee.

[2] Academic Integrity is referred to in this Procedure within the context of academic malpractice. The concept of Academic Integrity is much broader.

overarching position on AI is set out in the Guidelines for Staff and Students Using or Developing AI.

2.5. The University can minimise the opportunity for academic malpractice by:

2.5.1. Providing the information contained within this Procedure.

2.5.2. Varying assessment tasks, topics and questions from year to year.

2.5.3. Using forms of assessment that require demonstration of the understanding of knowledge rather than straightforward repetition of such knowledge.

2.5.4. Providing feedback in accordance with the Policy on Feedback to Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught Students, or for Postgraduate Research Students, the PGR Code of Practice.

2.5.5. Passing written work through Turnitin (the University's similarity detection software), where it is available, or equivalent software identified by the University which is designed to assist in detecting academic malpractice.

2.5.6. Providing clear information on the expectations of work, assessment criteria and the assessment process.

2.5.7. Giving students the opportunity to engage with academic supervision where this is available for their level of study and assessment.

2.5.8. Anticipate that malpractice may occur when setting assessment conditions.

2.6. Study skills support should be available to students in their academic School. Support also exists within other areas of the University, such as through the Library's My Learning Essentials. My Learning Essentials includes courses on academic integrity, plagiarism, referencing, planning work, revision, note taking, amongst others.

2.7. Students must not commit academic malpractice in their work. To avoid this, students are expected:

2.7.1. To produce and submit their own, original, work.

2.7.2. To ensure they manage and allocate their time effectively, from attending lectures and seminars, to work, reading and research outside their timetabled contact time.

2.7.3. To complete any work, reading and research identified by their Programme.

2.7.4. To familiarise themselves with the concepts of academic integrity and academic malpractice, read this Procedure and the Guidance for students on plagiarism and other forms of academic malpractice and engage with the study skills resources provided through their School and by the University.

2.7.5. To ensure they read and understand the instructions for any assessments and turn up to assessments on time to hear announcements.

2.7.6. To reflect on any feedback they are given on work and use this to inform their approach to future work.

2.7.7. To raise, in a timely manner, any assessment or study queries they may have, through Professional Service or academic colleagues in their School or Faculty, and alert the School or Faculty to personal circumstances that may be affecting their studies,

such as through mitigating circumstances (for taught students) or the Change of Circumstances (for research students).

3. Definitions

3.1. Academic malpractice

3.1.1. Academic malpractice is any attempt (intentional or otherwise) to gain, or assist others to gain, an unfair academic advantage in academic work or research. It includes plagiarism, collusion, fabrication or falsification of results, examination malpractice, contract cheating and anything else that could result in unearned or undeserved credit for those committing it. Academic malpractice can result from a deliberate act of cheating or may be committed unintentionally. Whether intended or not, all incidents of academic malpractice will be treated seriously by the University.

3.1.2. Types of academic malpractice include:

3.1.2.1. Plagiarism: The act of using ideas, words, or creations from either humans or digital systems, such as Generative Artificial intelligence, without proper attribution or permission and presenting them, either intentionally or unwittingly, as one's own work. Plagiarism encompasses a range of practices beyond just verbatim (word for word) copying. It also includes instances of close paraphrasing, minimal adaptation, and other actions that involve reproducing the work of another source in a way that means the assessed work lacks appropriate originality or proper referencing.

3.1.2.2. Self-plagiarism: re-using work that has previously submitted for a different assessment, either at The University of Manchester or a different institution, without appropriate citation. It is considered to be plagiarism because it misrepresents the novelty of the current work. Where a student uses a previous piece of work or publication in a future piece of work, they should ensure that they properly reference themself and the extent of such use should not be excessive.

3.1.2.3. Collusion: when a student or students permit or condone another student or students, to share a piece of work subject to assessment in order to gain a mark or grade to which they are not entitled. Students who allow another student to copy their work are also committing collusion and both the copier and the provider of the work are liable to be penalised. The methods of collusion may include, but are not limited to, sharing of work, ideas or plans by social media or other electronic communication means, and/or physical sharing of work, ideas or plans. Collusion may happen through an exchange or communication outside of an assessment submission and/or at the time of an assessment submission.

3.1.2.3.1. The University does, however, allow collaboration where students work in groups as part of their programme of research or in the preparation of projects and similar assessments. The person setting the work should make the expectations and the criteria by which the work will be marked clear. This may include reference to intended learning outcomes, the rubric and how marks will be allocated to individual contributing members of a group. Students should ensure that they are able to identify their contribution to the piece of work in group submissions. If malpractice appears in a group piece of work, then the group will normally be expected to take collective responsibility for the work and be seen as part of the same disciplinary hearing, unless individual members are able to (i) identify who contributed the element containing malpractice and/or (ii) distinguish their contribution to that of the other members of the group.

3.1.2.4. Fabrication or falsification of results, figures or data: the presentation or inclusion in a piece of work, by individual students or groups of students, of figures or any data (quantitative or qualitative) which have been made up or altered and which have no basis in verifiable sources; this may or may not involve other instances of academic malpractice.

3.1.2.5. Examination malpractice: when a student, during an examination, intentionally or unwittingly contravenes set exam conditions, such as by using or possessing unauthorised materials, software or devices, sharing (including electronically) exam questions, answers or related information (e.g. discussions) with others, and sitting or allowing someone to sit an examination in place of the student supposed to be taking the examination (this list should not be considered to be exhaustive). The student need not have gained a benefit from the malpractice nor does the input need to be pertinent for this definition to be met. This definition applies to all forms of exams including 'in-person' exams (e.g. based in an 'exam hall') and/or online exams.

3.1.2.6. Contract cheating: the commissioning of a piece of work by a third party, beyond basic proofreading. This may be where a student engages an essay mill or individual to request that they produce a piece of assessed work, in full or in part, for the student. This may also include the use of crowdsourcing, where a student obtains content from, or allows editing by, others and fails to acknowledge the contribution. Contract cheating may most often be associated with summative and/or coursework assessments, but may also be found in online examinations. .

3.1.3. Indicators of types of academic malpractice may include (but are not limited to) the following:

3.1.3.1. A significant block or numerous blocks of material or copied text expressing ideas or concepts taken from the work of others, such as books, websites, lectures slides, without appropriate acknowledgement or citation. This can include material which is:

3.1.3.1.1. not appropriately signalled as a quote by being placed in quotation marks.
3.1.3.1.2. the citation of a wrong source in a bibliography in order to evade plagiarism checks.
3.1.3.1.3. copied from others and which has been subjected to minor or superficial linguistic changes and presented as the student's own work, with or without citation.
3.1.3.1.4. minimally adapted and closely paraphrased from the original source.
3.1.3.1.5. not part of the commonly accepted phrasing or usage for academic subject of the work.

3.1.3.2. Synthesising material in an open book examination or assessment using a permitted source but not appropriately acknowledging the source.

3.1.3.3. Collusion between students as evidenced by structure, sources, a block or blocks of copied text, (including copied text subjected to minor or superficial linguistic changes).

3.1.3.4. Blocks of copied illustrations, computer code, graph, diagrams or other resource taken from another student or the work of others without appropriate referencing.

3.1.3.5. Results or data which cannot be substantiated on the basis of the material submitted by the student.

3.1.3.6. The use of content generated by AI and failing to acknowledge this contribution with referencing and quotations.

3.1.3.7. Stylistic, language, academic and other irregularities e.g. document data, reports from other individuals, which suggest the student may not have authored the work themselves.

3.2. Poor academic practice

3.2.1. Poor academic practice involves minor infringement of examination conditions or accepted citation practice where there is evidence that the student did not apply the appropriate rules of the assessment or academic writing and/or where the extent of copied or possessed material does not meet the level of significance such that it can be considered academic malpractice. Poor academic practice will not instigate disciplinary proceedings but can be taken account of through the marking process and the provision of advice and guidance. Poor academic practice may include (but is not limited to):

3.2.1.1. A limited amount of material or copied text expressing ideas or concepts taken from the work of others without appropriate citation, but largely presented in the student's own words.

3.2.1.2. A limited amount of material or copied text where the source is referenced in the bibliography but is not properly cited within the body of the assessment.

3.2.1.3. A limited amount of material or copied text that has been subject to reasonable linguistic and phrasing changes but is without citation.

3.2.1.4. Collaboration between students which has led to some minor similarities in structure, source or copied text, but where there remains sufficient originality in the students' respective work submissions.

3.2.1.5. Pieces of work which are largely constructed of the work and words of others, but which has been attributed to the source.

3.2.1.6. At a very early stage of an assessment, voluntarily surrendering unauthorised materials that the student was unaware of.

3.2.1.7. The possession of unauthorised materials, which are so minor in content, that they would unlikely provide any meaningful benefit to the student.

3.3. Misconduct in research

3.3.1. For the purposes of student discipline, research misconduct is defined by the same types of research misconduct as listed under the Code of Practice for Investigating Concerns about the Conduct of Research ("**Code of Practice**"). Similarly, what is considered to be poor practice in research will also mirror the definitions under the Code of Practice.

3.3.2. Some types of academic malpractice may constitute types of research misconduct and vice versa. Where there is such an overlap, the disciplinary process will usually focus on considering the dominant allegation(s) against the student.

3.3.3. Research misconduct can be committed by a student at any level of study, as part of work that is being, or has been, conducted or produced for the purposes of assessment or publication. Where a concern regarding the conduct of research arises about a

current student, this would normally be dealt with through the disciplinary process, rather than the Code of Practice.

3.3.4. If the alleged conduct affects a published piece of research work or a supervisor is implicated in a complaint about research misconduct then the Code of Practice would usually take precedence in the first instance for the purposes of investigating the allegation being made. Allegations that might meet either of these criteria should be referred to the Head of Research Governance, Ethics and Integrity as per the Code of Practice.

3.3.5. At the conclusion of an investigation under the Code of Practice, disciplinary action may be taken along with recommended actions to address the research misconduct e.g. requesting a publisher removes a piece of work.

4. Detection[3]

4.1. General

4.1.1. Disciplinary action for academic malpractice can usually only be taken where a student has submitted summative assessment containing malpractice. Malpractice in formative assessment may be more appropriately addressed through feedback and the marking process and with advice and guidance (e.g. an informal warning without a disciplinary panel). Disciplinary action cannot usually be taken prior to submission unless there are credible reasons, such as clear evidence of engagement of an essay mill. If an academic member of staff notices malpractice in work prior to it being submitted, it is reasonable to expect that the member of staff would warn the student of the consequences of committing malpractice.

4.1.2. Suspected malpractice may be detected through different means depending on the assessment. For example, a student may be found with unauthorised material by an examination invigilator, a Turnitin Report may flag text similarity, or other individuals may report student misbehaviour. To reach a point of making an allegation against a student, it is important to have gathered and objectively reviewed an appropriate body of evidence leading to the allegation, so that there are reasons identified for bringing a case. A case cannot be considered for disciplinary without that evidence and narrative. The scale of information gathering and review will vary according to the case, for example, in a plagiarism case an assignment may only need review by an academic whereas in a collusion case there might need to be some preliminary interviews with the parties involved. The sections below identify some common methods of detection and review. If a case does not fit neatly into those categories colleagues can adopt a hybrid approach drawing on any good practice that is suitable to the case at hand.

4.1.3. Examiners should continue to mark the work where possible as though the work does not contain academic malpractice. The mark should be withheld from the student pending any disciplinary action (this may lead to a pause on a student's ability to progress on a programme until disciplinary action has concluded). It is acknowledged that marking can prove difficult in some cases especially when there is substantial academic malpractice. If examiners feel unable to mark the work then they should indicate this with the disciplinary referral.

4.1.4. The University should normally decide upon whether a disciplinary referral is required within 20 working days from when suspected malpractice is detected. This timeframe

[3] This links to the Assessment sections of the Procedure for Summary Disciplinary Panels and the Procedure for the University Disciplinary Panel.

may be need to be extended depending on the level of information gathering required. Where a student has been contacted as part of an information gathering exercise, it is good practice to inform them at the conclusion of this process whether their case is being referred for formal disciplinary action or not.

4.2. Written assignments

4.2.1. Most essay or text-based assignments are submitted through Turnitin. This software allows the comparison of the work submitted for assessment, with other pieces of work or publications stored on Turnitin's database. Turnitin detects whether there is any similarity in the work to the other sources and produces a report showing where the similarity exists, the amount of similarity and a reference to the source. Turnitin alone does not confirm the presence of malpractice; an academic judgement must be made to reach this conclusion. Students are discouraged from using alternative software in an attempt to identify malpractice prior to the submission of an assessment; alternative software can be less comprehensive than Turnitin and return inaccurate results.

4.2.2. References in this document to Turnitin should be read as to include alternative software which the University uses and identifies. For example, Cadmus is used in some areas of the University, and the data from its learner analytics may provide an indication of academic malpractice e.g. time spent on producing the work. The University does not currently use software which claims to detect Generative AI; common indicators of malpractice, and information sources, should be reviewed as with other forms of suspected malpractice.

4.2.3. It is expected that examiners of assignments will:

4.2.3.1. Review any Turnitin report to help determine whether academic malpractice may have occurred.

4.2.3.2. In cases of poor academic practice, mark the piece of work in the usual way taking account of the poor academic practice and provide feedback to the student.

4.2.3.3. In cases of suspected academic malpractice:

4.2.3.3.1. Acquire the original source material where possible and indicate what sections of the material have been taken by the student, cross-referring to the material's location in the student's work.

4.2.3.3.2. Produce a statement/report, explaining why they consider there to be malpractice in the student's work. The statement/report needs to describe the case to a panel who potentially are unfamiliar with the work and material.

4.2.3.3.3. Continue to mark the work where possible but withhold the mark from the student.

4.2.3.3.4. Send the information above to an officer in the School ("**School Officer**"). This will usually be an Authorised University Officer ("**AUO**") (as defined in the Regulation)[4], or nominee thereof e.g. Academic Malpractice Officer, Programme Director, Director of Teaching and Learning etc.

4.2.4. If academic malpractice is first suspected during a viva for a thesis or similar piece of work, then the examination should continue, as this will allow discussion that may

[4] See section 7 of Regulation XVII. AUOs are University staff e.g. a Head of School, who have the authority to investigate and take disciplinary action against students. This includes delegated nominees of the AUO, and which might include the School Officer.

evidence the extent to which the work is that of the student. The examiners should thereafter produce a statement, cross referring to the viva and written work, in keeping with 4.2.2.3

4.2.5. The School Officer will decide, on the balance of probabilities, whether there is poor academic practice in the work or potential academic malpractice. In the case of the former, the piece of work will be referred back to the examiner in question, with appropriate advice as to how to proceed. In the case of the latter, the School Officer should arrange for disciplinary action to be taken.

4.3. Examination malpractice

4.3.1. Students must be informed of examination conditions before the start of the examination e.g. that they should not have any unauthorised materials on their person. Students are expected to complete examinations themselves independently, but sometimes allowances may be made to allow use of certain resources e.g. textbooks, websites. The responsibility to check and comply with examination conditions rests with the student.

4.3.2. Physical/'in-person' examinations (i.e. examinations taken in a physical exam hall/venue): Invigilators monitor the conditions of physical examinations, including checking student identification and checking for unauthorised material. Where exam malpractice is detected, the preliminary details of the incident should be recorded, such as the type and content of the material/malpractice, the time it was found, the examination title and start time etc. Students may be asked to leave the examination at the point unauthorised material is detected whilst the above details are obtained and the material is confiscated, but they may later be allowed to return to complete the examination in the time remaining.

4.3.2.1. The student will normally be asked to attend a post-examination interview with a member of staff at the Scheduling Team within the Division of Student and Academic Services (if the examination was arranged centrally) or their academic School (if the examination was arranged locally). At the interview additional information will be sought from the student. As per the Assessment stage of Regulation XVII, it may be determined that there is no case to answer, that the case can be addressed with advice and guidance or that the case requires referral to a disciplinary panel. Should a disciplinary panel be deemed appropriate, any information collected must be sufficient enough for presentation to a disciplinary panel.

4.3.2.2. For centrally arranged examinations, the Scheduling Team will notify the student and the student's academic School of a referral. The School may need to provide further details for the case to be actioned e.g. academic impact of penalties. The case will then be handled by the Division of Campus Life (Advice and Response Team).

4.3.3. Online examinations: the handling of cases will depend on the format of the examination and whether it is invigilated. Where an online examination is invigilated then an invigilator should speak with the student at the time highlighting their concerns and gathering preliminary details similarly to 4.3.1. The invigilator's report will then be passed for further consideration to the School Officer, or AUO, from the area with responsibility for administering the examination. The School Officer or AUO may complete a documentary review of the information available and/or gather more information to help make a decision by contacting (e.g. an email or meeting) the student, or others involved, before confirming whether the case requires formal disciplinary action.

4.3.4. Where examination malpractice is detected after an examination has ended, then the School Officer or AUO from the area responsible for administering the examination should review the information that has led to the allegation to determine whether a formal disciplinary referral needs to be made. The School Officer or AUO may identify that further correspondence or meetings with parties involved are required before a decision can be reached.

4.4. Contract cheating

4.4.1. The University sometimes receives reports from third parties alleging that a student may have submitted work which they have not produced. In such cases, enquiries may be made with the reporting party (e.g. association to the student, copies of the work, correspondence) to help indicate whether there is potential malpractice in the work. The information gathered may be sufficient to instigate further enquiry with the student concerned or to refer a case to a disciplinary panel. The absence of necessary information from the reporting party may mean a case cannot be progressed any further. Care should be taken to not divulge personal data about a student to a reporting party.

4.4.2. If there is a concern, based on indicators of malpractice, that a student may have commissioned a piece of work from a third party, but there is no direct evidence of this, or the information available does not satisfy the balance of probabilities, then in agreement with the School Officer a viva voce can be arranged to give the student the opportunity to demonstrate that they:

4.4.2.1. Produced the work;

4.4.2.2. Undertook the reading and research themselves;

4.4.2.3. Undertook the preparatory work themselves;

4.4.2.4. Understand what they have written.

4.4.3. If a viva voce is held, the following principles shall be met:

4.4.3.1. If a viva voce is to be conducted it should not normally take place more than 30 working days after the assessment feedback deadline.

4.4.3.2. The student should be given at least five working days' notice of the requirement to attend the viva voce. An explanation of what a viva voce is, the purpose of it and the potential outcomes should be outlined in the invitation. It should be made clear that the viva voce is arranged due to the detection of potential academic malpractice and it is to allow the student an opportunity to demonstrate that the work is their own; it will not contribute to any mark obtained for the piece of work.

4.4.3.3. Two members of academic staff (at least one of whom must be a subject specialist) must conduct the viva voce; this will normally be the School Officer and the examiner of the assessment.

4.4.3.4. The student may be accompanied by a person of their choice for support only (normally a fellow student, member of staff or Students' Union representative). Any individual accompanying the student should under no circumstances participate in the viva voce.

4.4.3.5. Reasonable adjustments must be made to ensure that candidates with additional support needs are not disadvantaged for reasons relating to a long-term medical condition, sensory impairment, specific learning difficulty and /or disability.

4.4.3.6. The viva voce will not normally exceed 45 minutes.

4.4.3.7. Depending on situational circumstances, the viva voce can be conducted via video link.

4.4.3.8. Intensive questions are expected. The questions asked should provide the student with the opportunity to demonstrate that the work is their own.

4.4.3.9. An accurate record of the viva voce should be taken; this record may be used to form the evidence base for any future disciplinary hearing. It may be necessary for an administrative member of staff to be present at the viva voce to make the record. The student is entitled to have a copy of the record.

4.4.4. The viva voce can have one of two outcomes:

4.4.4.1. The staff conducting the viva voce will confirm that they accept that the student wrote the work in question; no further action will be taken. The work should then be marked on its own merit, if it has not already been marked.

4.4.4.2. If the staff conducting the viva voce still remain doubtful of the authorship of the work in question, or the student admits that it is not their work, then the case should be referred for disciplinary action. The viva voce, in itself, will not result in a penalty being applied; a penalty can only be applied by a disciplinary panel.

5. Case handling

5.1. When academic malpractice has been identified following section 4 above, the AUO responsible for assessing the allegation should gather any supplementary information that may be relevant for a disciplinary hearing. In particular, they should enquire as to whether a student has any previous offences for academic malpractice as this will indicate the appropriate panel to refer a case to. This information is usually retained in the student's School record. This will assist the AUO in determining whether a case can be heard by a Summary Disciplinary Panel ("**SDP**") or if the case should be referred to the University Disciplinary Panel ("**UDP**").

5.2. The detection of academic malpractice will not normally lead to the review of a student's previous assessments, unless there is a reasonable suspicion that they may contain malpractice. If this is the case, prior to a disciplinary hearing, the AUO may review previous pieces assessments, but this will not normally extend to assessments outside the student's current level of study.

5.3. Cases will be handled as follows*:

Dealt with by	**Case types**
Fast-track (School, Faculty or Campus Life)	● Can be used with minor incidents of academic malpractice, usually where there is a first offence, for a student at an early year of study, the amount of malpractice is minimal and the matter (if established) will attract a low penalty. See also the Assessment section of the Procedure for Summary Disciplinary Panels / Procedure for the University Disciplinary Panel.

School-based SDP[5]	● UG programmes levels 4, 5 and CPD – first offence ● PGT programmes taught element – first offence
Faculty-based SDP	● UG programmes levels 4, 5 and CPD – second offences ● UG level 6 and above – first offence ● PGT programmes taught element – second offence ● PGT dissertation element – first offence ● PGR taught element – first offence
Campus Life-based SDP[6]	● All UG or PGT programmes – first and second offences of examination malpractice in examinations administered by the Division of Student and Academic Services following the case handling structure set out within this table. Penalties open to a Campus Life SDP will align with what may be available to case types handled at School or Faculty SDPs (above). ● Academic malpractice allegations which cannot be addressed through the usual School / Faculty routes.
UDP	● UG programmes levels 4, 5 and CPD – third (or further) offences ● UG programmes level 6 and above – second (or further) offences ● PGT programmes taught element – third (or further) offences ● PGT programmes dissertation element – any subsequent offence ● PGR taught element – subsequent offence ● PGR progression assessment, thesis or viva – first offence ● Any student – a significant offence
Head of Research Governance, Ethics and Integrity	● Misconduct in research by a student at any level of study if the criteria under 3.3 has been met.

5.4. The original person who reported the alleged malpractice should not be a member of the disciplinary panel. Additionally, where a student has already been interviewed or attended a viva as part of the information gathering exercise, any future disciplinary panel should not include, as a member of the panel, the same examiner or School Officer.

5.5. Where it is alleged that a student has committed significant academic malpractice they will normally be referred to the UDP. In addition to the table under paragraph 5.2, the following may be of consideration in deciding whether a case is significant:

5.5.1. The suspected amount of malpractice is a particularly high proportion of the assessment.

5.5.2. The assessment containing suspected malpractice is high credit bearing and/or important to a student's award or progression.

[5] In cases concerning the University College for Interdisciplinary Learning ("**UCIL**"), students will be from a range of academic Schools. Cases of academic malpractice detected by a UCIL unit convenor will be referred by UCIL to the student's home School for consideration.

[6] SDP cases handled in this Division are usually led by Professional Services staff; exam misconduct cases will be conducted in partnership with academic colleagues, and where possible, with at least one academic panel member.

5.5.3. It is suspected that multiple assessments in a single assessment period contain academic malpractice.

5.5.4. The penalty applied in any previous case. If a student has already had the maximum penalty applied for a first offence at summary level, then a subsequent offence may attract a penalty that is open only to the UDP.

5.5.5. The penalties open to summary level do not reflect the severity of the offence i.e. it is considered that the student's overall degree award should be reduced e.g. from an Honours degree to a Diploma.

5.5.6. Where there is prima facie evidence of substantial efforts to commit malpractice and avoid detection.

5.6. If the same offence relates to multiple students, but for one or more students it is a subsequent offence, then the University will aim to consider all students at the same level for consistency in the decision making. As part of any investigation or review, it is important for the School Officer or AUO to attempt to identify each student's role in the misconduct. Previous relevant conduct can be taken into account in the application of a penalty. Where a case relates to a large number of students, such that it would be impractical for all to be considered at the same hearing, or it may result in unreasonable delay, consideration may be given to handling cases at different levels based on the table divisions in 5.3 with a logical ordering of cases identified and dialogue maintained between case handlers.

5.7. Disciplinary hearings that relate to malpractice should be academic led or coordinated in partnership with academic colleagues. As per the Procedure for Summary Disciplinary Panels, it is recommended that SDPs considering allegations of academic malpractice comprise at least two persons, with the Chair usually being an academic with appropriate experience and sufficient knowledge of malpractice. Where an allegation may result in a higher penalty and the consequences may be more severe e.g. a subsequent offence, it is recommended that a panel is extended to three persons. Members of Professional Services will normally support malpractice disciplinary hearings but may, where they have a substantive knowledge of malpractice and experience in discipline, be included in the membership of a disciplinary panel.

5.8. Examples of case handling:

5.8.1. An Undergraduate student has a first offence of academic malpractice on file for plagiarism from their first year. This was dealt with by a School-based SDP. A second offence arises, but this relates to examination malpractice (unauthorised material) in a second-year examination; this is dealt with by a Campus Life-based SDP.

5.8.2. A first-year Undergraduate student has a first offence on file relating to examination misconduct (unauthorised material) that was dealt with by a Campus Life-based SDP. A second offence of academic malpractice (plagiarism) arises and so this is dealt with by a Faculty-based SDP.

5.8.3. A Postgraduate Taught student is believed to have committed substantial plagiarism in a high credit bearing piece of work (dissertation). Although it is a first offence, the malpractice is considered to be significant and so is referred to the UDP.

5.8.4. Three level 5 Undergraduate students are believed to have colluded in a piece of work. One of the students has a previous offence of malpractice on file and so the case is referred from School level to Faculty. The Faculty-based SDP later differentiates the penalties applied, with the student who had a first offence on file, receiving a higher penalty.

Related procedures:

- Procedure for Summary Disciplinary Panels
- Procedure for the University Disciplinary Panel

6. Document control

Document control box	
Policy / Procedure title:	Academic Malpractice Procedure
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Version:	Unknown (at least 4)
Supersedes:	Academic Malpractice Procedure (May 2022)
Previous review dates:	2018/19
Next review date:	2024/25
Related Statutes, Ordinances, General Regulations:	● Statute XXI (Conduct, discipline and academic progress of students) ● Regulation XVII (Conduct and Discipline of Students)
Equality relevance outcome:	High / Medium (delete as applicable)
Related policies/procedures/guidance:	● Procedure for Summary Disciplinary Panels ● Procedure for the University Disciplinary Panel
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Amendment history

Version	Date	Reason for change
1	07/2014	
2	04/2019	Substantive re-write of the procedure, including definitions and detection.
3	05/2021	Multiple changes, to reflect change in practice. Main updates concern examination misconduct, due to move to online assessments, and collusion.
4	05/2022	Changes around 4.3.2 and 5.3 due to responsibility changes following SEP restructure, mainly Scheduling Team (formerly Exam Team) remain responsible for information gathering for centrally arranged exams but Campus Life now responsible for any disciplinary hearings that result from central exam malpractice.
5	11/2023 (effective 01/2024)	Multiple updates agreed by Student Conduct and Discipline Committee, notably to definitions, set out student expectations, include reference to Generative AI, future proof and refine wording.
6	03/2025	Updated paragraph 5.7 to remove Senior Lecturer requirement as Chairs. Updated links at 2.4 and 3.1.2.6