



English Language Centre Academic Integrity Guidelines

A guide to the interpretation of the University of Liverpool's Academic Integrity Policy, as it pertains to the specifics of teaching, learning and assessment in the English Language Centre

Directorate of Student Experience and Enhancement

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CONTENTS

Section 1 – Purpose of this Policy.....	3
Introduction	3
Scope.....	4
Section 2 – Definitions and Explanations of Terms	4
About this Section	4
Poor Academic Practice	4
Academic Misconduct.....	5
Section 3 - Academic Judgement	7
Academic Judgement	7
Use of Turnitin	7
Section 4 - Responsibilities of Staff and Students	8
Responsibilities of Staff.....	8
Responsibilities of Students	9
Section 5 - Procedures in Cases of Academic Misconduct	9
Sanctions and Penalties	14
Appendices	16
Appendix 1	16
Appendix 2	17
Appendix 3	19
Appendix 4	20

SECTION 1 – PURPOSE OF THIS POLICY

INTRODUCTION

Studying at the English Language Centre (ELC) is both challenging and rewarding. Staff and students alike are expected to embrace and uphold the values of the academic community, and make the ELC a place of integrity, honesty and respect.

The vast majority of students on courses and modules within the ELC are international students, from a wide range of backgrounds, cultures, and studying at various different levels. The ELC recognises that our students are therefore more likely to need help and guidance adjusting to the particular academic practices and standards required at UK universities. It is possible that accepted conventions and practices in one academic community may be regarded as academic misconduct, or poor practice in another. We take the view that while our students are studying at the ELC they are *de facto* apprentice members of the UK academic community. As apprentices, we will provide them with additional and explicit information and training regarding academic integrity and practice. We also recognise that they are relatively inexperienced in this area, even if they are studying at higher levels, and this understanding will underpin our academic judgement on their practice.

The ethos of many of our courses and modules is one of guidance and support. International Summer School students, for example, are here for a very short period of time, studying a range of subjects at undergraduate level. These modules can be viewed as a taster, or brief introduction to UK university culture, where an in-depth knowledge of academic rigor and practice is not a strict requirement, particularly as they will shortly return to their home universities. Pre-sessional (PSE) students intend to progress on to study at the University of Liverpool (UoL) on either UGR, PGT or PGR programmes, on which they will require a good working knowledge of UK academic practice. The PSE course at the ELC is a stepping stone; a transitional stage in which we prepare our students for study at UK universities, not only linguistically, but also in terms of academic readiness and awareness of good practice.

Thus, while we are extremely committed to upholding academic standards and good practice, our approach to dealing with infractions is likely to have a greater emphasis on ensuring that our students understand their infraction in the context of UK academic practice, and how to ensure that they can follow good practice in the future.

SCOPE

Identification of poor academic practice and academic misconduct may take place at any time during a student's time with the ELC, including during formative as well as summative assessment. Issues relating to academic integrity and practice during day-to-day teaching and learning activities, including formative assessment, will be dealt with directly by the student's teacher(s), in the spirit of guidance and training. This may include highlighting the issue, providing clear feedback on the severity of the issue and how to correct it. This may even include a written warning in the case of serious misconduct, issued by the teacher and/or the course Academic Lead (AL)/ Coordinator or module leader if deemed necessary.

Formal application of penalties and sanctions will be reserved for summative assessments only. These will include all types of assessment which count towards the final mark for that course or module, including but not limited to exams, written assignments, presentations, group work, and practical assessments. Any instances of suspected academic misconduct on summative assessments will follow the formal procedures laid out below in Section 5.

SECTION 2 – DEFINITIONS AND EXPLANATIONS OF TERMS

ABOUT THIS SECTION

This section contains definitions, examples and explanations of the different types of issues that may arise relating to academic integrity. The category of 'Poor Academic Practice' includes infractions that fall into both Category A and B in the UoL Academic Integrity Policy, but these are not considered to be academic misconduct, which includes a variety of deliberately dishonest practices.

POOR ACADEMIC PRACTICE

It is likely that many issues relating to academic integrity raised with ELC students will fall into the category of poor academic practice. This occurs where a student shows a lack of understanding of good academic practice and appropriate academic representation. Examples include sources being cited incorrectly or inadequately or without quotation marks, inadequate referencing, poor paraphrasing or patch-writing.

Poor academic practice is generally identified by the lack of clear intent to deceive. Investigation into a case of alleged academic misconduct might yield a decision that the student's actions fall into the category of poor academic practice, particularly if any of the following are true: - it is the student's first offence; - the student is in their first year of study in a UK university; - the issue is a fairly minor error of referencing; - there is evidence that the conduct arose from a genuine lack of understanding of academic integrity expectations. In these circumstances, and where the alleged misconduct is not flagrant or pervasive, and is not the result of an overall lack of effort or application, it may be judged to be merely poor academic practice, or minor error.

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

Academic misconduct refers to any conduct or practice by a student which is dishonest and/or seeks to gain unfair advantage over other students, with a deliberate intent to deceive. The different categories or areas of misconduct are described below.

PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism occurs when a student represents or presents another person's work, opinions, ideas, images, data, words, etc. as their own. Examples of forms of plagiarism include, but are not limited to:

- **Copying** - the verbatim or direct copying of another's work (including images, audio-visuals, etc.) without acknowledging and correctly citing the source
- **Close paraphrasing / patch-writing** of another person's work by making minimal and minor changes to wording or order, especially without acknowledging and citing the source
- **Incorrect referencing** – failing to list references appropriately or to identify or cite the source correctly
- **Deliberate and detailed presentation of another's concept as one's own.**

Another area of academic misconduct may be the practice of a student submitting work for summative assessments, or academic credit, which that same student has submitted previously or simultaneously for academic credit at the ELC, UoL or any other awarding body. It also refers to the submission of previously published work for academic credit. A student may obtain permission to use their own previously submitted work, but it must be properly referenced as such, and authorisation should be in writing from the course director or coordinator, or the module leader.

CHEATING

Cheating may take a variety of forms, but at its basis constitutes acting dishonestly and without integrity to gain an unfair advantage.

Examples of cheating include, but are not limited to:

- Taking unauthorised material into an exam
- Using unauthorised tools or technology in an exam or practical assessment – e.g. a phone, internet access
- Not following instructions during an exam, either on the exam paper or given by the invigilator.
- Copying or attempting to copy another person's work during an exam
- Presenting false evidence of extenuating circumstances or learning differences to gain an unfair advantage, such as deadline extension.
- Making up or altering data for research projects or assessments
- Contract cheating

CONTRACT CHEATING

This refers to a specific type of cheating which includes, but is not limited to:

- A student purchasing or commissioning an assessment from a professional writing service or third party and presenting it as their own work.
- Third party translation (by another person) of an entire assessment, or significant portions thereof, from one language to another.
- Use of a professional writing service or another person to edit an assessment or parts of it to cause changes to the language, structure or content.

COLLUSION

Collusion refers to two or more students deliberately working together to produce or write work which each then submits individually, representing it as their own independent work. It may also refer to unapproved collaboration with another person, such as a friend or family

member, in producing work which is represented as the student's individual effort. Collusion **does not** refer to group work, or similar collaborative projects, which have official approval and expectation of collaboration.

SECTION 3 - ACADEMIC JUDGEMENT

ACADEMIC JUDGEMENT

This refers to situations where it is necessary to have the opinion of an academic expert, such as those relating to academic practice and integrity. Academic judgement is established through time and experience and related to an academic's disciplinary expertise in teaching, learning and assessment in a university setting.

The majority of ELC students respect and abide by the values and standards of the UK academic community during their studies here, and are aware of the importance of the hard work required by the learning process. However, a small number may be tempted to take short-cuts or gain an unfair advantage by cheating or otherwise committing academic misconduct.

ELC academic staff have substantial experience and expertise in identifying poor academic practice and academic misconduct. In addition to their own judgement, they may also make use of the software 'Turnitin' or other means to help them to identify the original source of a text. The combination of the academic judgement of our staff with tools such as Turnitin helps ensure that academic misconduct is detected and brought to light.

USE OF TURNITIN

The University uses an internet-based text-matching service called Turnitin to provide evidence of originality of electronic coursework submissions. The tool compares text submitted with a wide range of electronic material, including journals, websites and student work from current and previous years, from Liverpool and other UK universities. The software highlights if students have submitted the same or similar text as another student, or published material, or if they have submitted the same or similar text for more than one assessment.

Turnitin is the most commonly used tool for the submission of assessments across the university. The ELC requires summative assessments to be submitted through Turnitin wherever practicable, for a number of reasons. It provides ease of submission and access to marks and feedback for students, allows staff to track submissions and follow up with any missing work quickly, as well as marking and recording marks and feedback digitally. Additionally, because it is such a commonly used tool in UK HEIs, its use at the ELC provides valuable early training for students in its use and functionality.

The originality reports created by Turnitin are considered for possible plagiarism as part of a review of a submission. However, it is the ELC, and not the software tool, that will make a decision about whether plagiarism has taken place; Turnitin is just one element of the evidence used to inform our academic judgement. Whether or not the ELC has used Turnitin routinely for a particular assessment, if the marker suspects plagiarism, that piece of work may be submitted to Turnitin as an additional precaution.

The ELC will check all originality reports for work submitted electronically through Turnitin for plagiarism during the marking process for that course or module, regardless of the percentage match indicated by the similarity index. The module leader or course director is ultimately responsible for checking originality reports, but may delegate this to the markers.

Training in the use of Turnitin is provided for both the staff and students of the ELC, although may vary depending on the course or module.

SECTION 4 - RESPONSIBILITIES OF STAFF AND STUDENTS

RESPONSIBILITIES OF STAFF

Academic staff at the ELC have a duty to provide guidance and support to our students and help them to understand and follow the academic practices and standards within the UK while they are studying here.

Our staff are responsible for:

- Familiarising themselves with these ELC Academic Integrity Guidelines and Code of Practice on Assessment.

- Being aware of additional guidance available in The UoL Code of Practice on Assessment (CoPA) and Academic Integrity Policy.
- Ensuring that all ELC students are aware of the requirement to take the KnowHow module on Academic Integrity
- Providing students with additional support and guidance as appropriate – e.g. directing them to library resources such as CiteThemRight, incorporating additional Academic Integrity training into the curriculum or classes
- Dealing with minor issues of poor academic practice informally during regular teaching and learning activities, using these as opportunities to raise student awareness of the importance of academic integrity, and how to avoid similar issues in the future.
- Ensuring that information given to students around issues relating to academic integrity is clear, accurate and easy for students to access.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF STUDENTS

Our students are responsible for:

- Familiarising themselves with the information provided to them in their student handbooks, study materials and other sources provided by the ELC.
- Asking for clarification if they are unsure about any of the information relating to academic standards and integrity
- Completing the KnowHow module on Academic Integrity as directed
- Paying attention to and responding to feedback on academic conduct issues, e.g. taking steps to remedy any referencing issues flagged by a teacher in a draft assignment.
- Ensuring that at all times they are acting with academic integrity and honesty, and respecting the academic community, including not allowing or encouraging others to act dishonestly (e.g. not allowing another student to copy work from them).
- Signing a declaration (Appendix 1) with assessed work as required, indicating that the submission is all their own work.

SECTION 5 - PROCEDURES IN CASES OF ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

Issues arising during regular teaching and learning activities, including formative assessments:

Instances of minor errors, such as missing quotation marks or referencing errors, can be dealt with informally by the teacher as part of the learning process, highlighting the problem and ensuring students know how to repair the error.

Instances of poor academic practice, such as patch-writing, accidental plagiarism or collusion, can be dealt with by the teacher. They should ensure that students are reminded of the seriousness of such matters, and that students are directed to remedial help and information as needed.

In the unlikely event that students act with deliberate intent to deceive and gain unfair advantage outside of summative assessments (e.g. they submit a draft essay for formative assessment that is not their own work, or blatantly cheat during a class test) this should be dealt with swiftly and decisively. A teacher who suspects or witnesses such misconduct should inform the course coordinator or module leader as soon as possible, and no later than 24 hours after the fact. The course coordinator or module leader should then confirm the teacher's judgement if possible. If both agree, a suitable course of action should be decided and initiated as soon as possible and no later than a week after the fact. This course of action may include some or all of the following:

- A meeting with the teacher, the course coordinator/module leader and another senior academic to ask the student to account for their behaviour and to impress upon them the possible serious implications of such behaviour
- A formal written warning from the course coordinator/module leader and a note being added to their record for the rest of their studies with the ELC, ensuring that any future misconduct would be dealt with as a repeat offence
- A requirement to complete additional remedial work or training to help address the cause of the issue if applicable
- A requirement to resubmit an original draft and bear any late penalties that result from this, if applicable.

Issues arising during summative assessments

Instances of minor errors and poor academic practice can be dealt with by the marker or examiner directly. A mark penalty should be applied, as laid out in the marking scheme, with reference to the assessment criteria. At least one of the criteria should relate to academic practice and conventions, allowing for minor errors and poor academic practice to

be penalised directly during the marking process. As a rule, such penalties should reduce the overall score by 1-10%, depending on the types and frequency of issues. Clear feedback should also be provided as to how to avoid this error or issue in the future, where possible.

If the marker or examiner has any reason to suspect an intent to deceive, such as pervasive or flagrant patch-writing or plagiarism, deliberate cheating in an exam, or contract cheating, then the following procedures should be followed:

- Where appropriate the work should be submitted to Turnitin by the marker/examiner and the similarity report checked.
- The marker/examiner should then report the suspected academic malpractice to the course coordinator/ module leader and to the assessment team.
- A member of the assessment team will investigate the alleged misconduct by inviting the marker/examiner to provide evidence and reasons for the allegation, and inviting the student(s) to provide an explanation of the circumstances (see Appendix 2). This will normally take the place of a formal meeting in person, but may be held online or via email if necessary.
- If the academic staff involved in the investigation are satisfied that academic misconduct has taken place the assessment team representative should provide a report to the Academic Integrity Committee (AIC) who will convene earlier in the day of the relevant Exam Board. The AIC will consider the report and make a recommendation as to the penalty or sanction to be imposed.
- The report and the AIC's recommendation will be taken forward to the Exam Board who will check and confirm the penalties or sanctions to be imposed. A copy of the report will also be sent to the student(s) involved, which will also include a dated written warning outlining the consequences of any further academic misconduct (see Appendix 3).

PROCEDURES SPECIFIC TO THE PSE COURSE

1. Markers are to flag any cases of suspected academic misconduct (SAM) on the SAM spreadsheet during the marking process.

2. This includes chunks of text four lines or more of directly copied text, work with sustained examples of patch writing with poorly paraphrased ideas and/or suspected collusion with software.
3. Markers should apply a mark using the criteria for the remainder of the work as usual.
4. The Coordination Team (AL/ Coordinator(s) and Senior Academic Lead (SAL)) review the work on Turnitin to determine whether the issue is considered an issue of poor academic practice or SAM.
5. For infringements judged to fall into the category of minor errors/ poor academic practice, the Coordination team are to ensure that the marking penalty has been applied by the marker with reference to the relevant Intended Learning Outcome in the assessment criteria. If necessary, the Coordination team can amend the original marker's score to apply the penalty in line with the infraction. If appropriate, the Coordination team also invite affected students to a session outlining some of the issues reported and how to avoid them in future.
6. If the issue requires more investigation, the Coordination team will schedule an interview with the student, to help determine the scope and seriousness of the issue.
7. All cases investigated will be presented to and discussed at the Academic Integrity Committee. Penalties agreed at the Committee are recorded on the SAM spreadsheet.
8. For major infringements with a high similarity, but where intent to deceive cannot be established, the assessment grade is capped at the student's minimum pass mark, after the normal marking penalties have been applied. For example, if a student scores 53% after being marked as normal, and their minimum pass mark is 50%, they receive a score of 50%. However, if their minimum pass mark is 60%, they receive the score of 53% as normal.
9. A member of the Coordination team amends the score on Turnitin and adds the penalty to the SAM spreadsheet.
10. Students whose work has been investigated (and possibly penalised) receive notification of this in the feedback section of Turnitin and in an official email sent by the Coordination team. General details are reported at the Board of Examiners.

In repeated cases, the student is called into a meeting with the AL/ Coordinator and SAL. In cases where students fail the writing assessment, this information will be made available to the Board of Examiners.

COLLUSION WITH SOFTWARE

One of the main purposes of the PSE assessments is to ensure that students have met the English language conditions of their original academic programmes. This is, in turn, to ensure that students have the ability to function independently and confidently on the future courses that they study.

There is no expectation that students at this stage of their academic journey will be able to produce work of an advanced level of English, and this is reflected in the PSE marking criteria. However, it is common and indeed encouraged practice for students to facilitate their studies with the use of online tools such as dictionaries, corpus-based apps and translation software. Nevertheless, in terms of academic integrity, if a student's writing is far beyond what is reasonably expected for them to produce at this level, or what they have produced in previous submissions/ samples of work, this may be a result of over-reliance on software and potential collusion with software. This includes the use of apps or software such as Grammarly to check or correct aspects of the assessment such as organisation and structure, or argument. The ELC only permits the minimal use of technology to translate words or check spelling and surface-level grammar; similar to the checks offered in a basic word-processor like Word or Pages.

During the course in the lessons and talks, teachers and the Coordination team emphasise to students the importance and value of writing independently rather than over-relying on technology. This is to ensure that students receive feedback on their actual ability to communicate in English (and not what the software can produce) and how to improve their skills without the excessive use of online tools. Students are also informed of the possible penalties for this area of academic misconduct.

At the formative submission stages, if a teacher suspects that the work is not the student's own, they should ask specific questions relating to the criteria (e.g. about specific lexis for Communicative Competence or about a key idea from a source where the use of sources or choices in structure or referencing techniques are not the ones taught on the course) to allow the student to demonstrate authorship of their essay. Teachers are to advise students at the draft stage of the potential consequences of colluding with software.

If, during the final summative submissions, a student submits work that is beyond their level of English seen in class and in previous work, teachers are to flag this on the SAM spreadsheet. Following investigation, the Coordination team will invite the student to a meeting to discuss the ideas and/or language to establish the students' own voice and authorship. If a student has been advised at the draft stage and this is repeated in the final submission, a cap of 50% will be applied. As a result, they may meet the minimum

requirements to pass the PSE summer course, but they may not be able to progress onto the course of their choice.

SANCTIONS AND PENALTIES

Description of misconduct	Determined by	Consequences
<p>During regular teaching & learning / formative assessments</p> <p>Serious academic misconduct with clear intent to deceive, e.g. blatant cheating on a class test, contract cheating for draft submission</p>	<p>Teacher</p> <p>Then confirmed with course coordinator/ module leader and assessment team</p> <p>They may then decide on some or all of the consequences with regards to that particular situation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A meeting with the teacher, the course coordinator/module leader and another senior academic to ask the student to account for their behaviour and to impress upon them the possible serious implications of such behaviour - A formal written warning from the course coordinator/module leader and a note being added to their record for the rest of their studies with the ELC, ensuring that any future misconduct would be dealt with as a repeat offence - A requirement to complete additional remedial work or training to help address the cause of the issue if applicable - A requirement to resubmit an original draft and bear any late penalties that result from this, if applicable.
<p>During summative assessment</p> <p>Minor errors and poor academic practice</p>	<p>Internal examiner / marker</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mark penalty to be applied, as laid out in the marking scheme, in reference to the assessment criteria.

<p>where there is no clear intent to deceive</p>	<p>May confer with moderator or double-marker</p> <p>All consequences apply</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clear feedback provided as to how to avoid this error or issue in the future. - Recommendation to undertake further training to improve understanding.
<p>During summative assessment</p> <p>Academic misconduct, including plagiarism, copying, collusion or cheating, where intent to deceive cannot be established because the student has not received a prior written warning.</p>	<p>Internal examiner / marker</p> <p>Moderator</p> <p>Assessment team representative</p> <p>All consequences apply</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Report of investigation and first written warning issued to student, with a note added to their record for the rest of their studies at the ELC ensuring that future misconduct will be dealt with as a repeat offence - Mark penalty to be applied as normal, in reference to assessment criteria - If assessment still passes, then assessment mark capped at student's* minimum pass grade - Requirement for student to re-take academic integrity module
<p>During summative assessment</p> <p>Serious academic malpractice with a clear intent to deceive and gain unfair advantage, e.g. contract cheating, highly organised collusion</p> <p>And/or</p> <p>Academic misconduct which is a proven repeat offence with a written warning issued to the</p>	<p>Internal examiner / marker</p> <p>Moderator</p> <p>Assessment team representative</p> <p>AIC and Exam Board to agree which consequence(s) to apply</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 0% for the assessment - OR - 0% for the module - OR - Suspension or termination of studies - AND - Report of investigation and written warning issued - AND/OR - A note added to the student's academic record which may follow them onto other programmes of study in the future

student more than 7 calendar days prior.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - AND/OR - Requirement for student to re-take academic integrity module
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*Students may have different pass marks, dependent on the entry requirements of their intended programme.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

DECLARATION OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

NAME (Print)	
STUDENT NUMBER	
MODULE TITLE/CODE	
TITLE OF WORK	

This form should be completed by the student and appended to any piece of work that is submitted for summative assessment. Submission of the form by electronic means by a student constitutes their confirmation of the terms of the declaration.

STUDENT DECLARATION

I confirm that I have completed the online Academic Integrity module as recommended.

I confirm that I have read and understood the information provided to me by the English Language Centre regarding academic integrity and good academic practice.

I confirm that I have acted honestly, ethically and professionally in preparing and submitting this assessment.

I confirm that:

- I have not copied material from another source
- I have not committed plagiarism
- I have not colluded with another person
- I have not used a professional writing service or another person to write or significantly alter this assessment

I confirm that the work submitted for assessment is my own work.

I understand that academic malpractice may result in penalties, including failing the assessment or the course of studies.

SIGNATURE.....

DATE.....

APPENDIX 2

NOTIFICATION OF AN INVESTIGATION UNDER THE ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY

NAME (Print)	
STUDENT NUMBER	
MODULE TITLE/CODE	

To be completed by the person responsible for assessment

APPENDIX 3

WRITTEN WARNING

NAME (Print)	
STUDENT NUMBER	
MODULE TITLE/CODE	
TITLE OF WORK	
DATE OF NOTIFICATION	

To be completed by the person responsible for assessment

The ELC recently investigated the allegation of your academic misconduct and found evidence to suggest that (*indicate as applicable*):

Plagiarism Copying Collusion Dishonest use of data

had taken place and exceeded poor academic practice; I have indicated on the returned assessment where the affected material is.

Definitions of these terms can be found in the English Language Centre's Academic Integrity Guidelines, and the University of Liverpool's Code of Practice on Assessment Appendix L.

The ELC and the University view all academic misconduct seriously. On this occasion to avoid any future similar allegation and potential penalties, I am issuing you with this written warning about the need to observe the Academic Integrity Guidelines. A copy of this warning will be placed on your records.

You are very strongly advised to complete the on-line Academic Integrity module which can be

found at https://vital.liv.ac.uk/webapps/portal/frameset.jsp?url=%2Fwebapps%2Fportal%2Fframeset.jsp%3Furl%3D%252Fwebapps%252Fblackboard%252Fcontent%252FlistContent.jsp%253Fcourse_id%253d_860044_1%2526content_id%253d_1633765_1%2526mode%253d_reset

Completion of this module does not in itself constitute an admission of guilt of academic misconduct. Failure to complete the module however could put you at risk of a second or subsequent allegation being automatically investigated and penalised more severely. Your completion of the module will be electronically registered.

I am recommending a penalty of

_____ to your
Exam Board.

NAME OF ELC STAFF MEMBER

DEPARTMENT.....

APPENDIX 4

Email template for communicating minor errors or poor academic practice to student

Dear _____

Following your recent essay submission on the 20-week (change as applicable) Pre-sessional, I am writing to inform you that you have received a penalty to the mark for Task Achievement due to ... e.g. copy-and-paste plagiarism and/ or poor paraphrasing (patchwriting).

The assessment requirement is for you to incorporate ideas from the source texts into your writing using paraphrasing. However, your work showed high levels of similarity with the published source texts provided on the course. As your tutors have highlighted, this is not acceptable academic practice and on your academic Master's programme (change for individual student) this is taken extremely seriously and could result in a penalty being applied to your work.

Since the Pre-sessional course is a preparatory course, we will be not taking any further action. There was sufficient language of your own for us to be able to make a judgement on your level of writing. Please use this as a learning experience, and be careful not to make the same mistake again in the final submission at the end of the course.

It would be advisable to review the materials on note-taking, using sources in writing and paraphrasing before you submit your next piece of written work. This is a difficult skill to

master, and so if you are still facing difficulties with paraphrasing (change as applicable) please speak to your tutors for further advice.

Yours sincerely,