



CODE OF PRACTICE ON ASSESSMENT

APPENDIX L

Academic Integrity Policy

2025-26

Applicable to all cohorts

In the Code of Practice on Assessment and all Appendices the term “student” includes apprentices on degree apprenticeship programmes

Academic Integrity Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Academic integrity is concerned with the ethical code that applies to the standards by which the academic community operates. It represents the values of honesty, fairness and respect for others. While this encompasses the expectation that students will not cheat in assessments nor deliberately try to mislead examiners and assessors, it is just as important to emphasise the positive role that academic integrity plays in each student's intellectual and professional development and in their successful transition to graduate employment and future careers. Students who embrace academic integrity understand that they must produce their own work, acknowledging explicitly any material that has been included from other sources or legitimate collaboration, and to present their own findings, conclusions or data based on appropriate and ethical practice. In accordance with Appendix D, each School/Department should have an Academic Integrity Officer, who is a member of academic staff. The Academic Integrity Officer will conduct investigations into allegations of Academic Misconduct.
- 1.2 There are conventions of academic practice, such as established referencing and citation protocols, which both display and ensure academic integrity. The acquisition of relevant study skills such as effective note-taking, the ability to critically evaluate other writers' theories and concepts and presentation skills, will help students to understand these conventions. Failure to adhere to these conventions can result in poor academic practice or, if there is dishonesty, in academic misconduct.
- 1.3 The policy sets out the process to be followed where matters of academic integrity are identified and the penalties to be applied where academic integrity issues are established.
- 1.4 There are four academic integrity categories. Category 1 is distinct from Categories 2-4. Category 1 is determined by the academic judgement of the marker/assessor and covers practice where there has been failure, due to lack of academic ability or understanding, to observe the expected standards associated with academic integrity when undertaking academic work. Category 2 captures first offences in which dishonesty can be established or inferred. Category 3 covers offences where dishonesty can be established. Category 4 covers inherently dishonest acts where a student intends to gain an advantage over other students by wilfully seeking to deceive assessors and/or examiners. Such acts are often but not always premeditated and would include offences subsequent to a prior written warning of academic malpractice.
- 1.5 No student with an unresolved academic integrity matter against them can graduate, including those students who have registered an appeal against a decision taken against them with regards to academic integrity.
- 1.6 Personal Extenuating Circumstances (PECs) will not be accepted as a good reason for committing academic misconduct. Where a student has PECs accepted in relation to an assessment but is found to have committed academic misconduct in that same assessment, then the academic misconduct penalty shall overrule any personal extenuating circumstances decision. PECs can be taken into account to mitigate the extent of a penalty for Category 2, 3 or 4 offences by the Academic Integrity Committee who may recommend to the Board of Examiners that the

penalty be reduced and providing the rationale for this in the context of accepted PECs.

2. Scope of this policy

This policy applies to all (undergraduate and postgraduate) taught students throughout their period of registration with the University including:

- Students studying for a University of Liverpool award who spend any time off campus (such as placement, year abroad/in industry, off-site research);
- Students studying for a University of Liverpool award wholly online including those studying with online partners;
- The academic integrity policy and procedures for students studying for a single University of Liverpool award or a joint or dual award of the University with one or more institutional partners, under a specific collaborative agreement, will be made explicit in that agreement and students will be informed of these arrangements when they register.

2.1 Acts or allegations relating to misconduct in research will be considered under the University's Policy on Misconduct in Research. All allegations of potential misconduct in research must be referred to the Named Person (integrity@liverpool.ac.uk) for initial assessment in accordance with the University Policy on Misconduct in Research:

<https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/research-integrity/research-misconduct/>

This policy does not apply to work submitted for formal assessment that is undertaken under invigilated examination conditions. This should be dealt with in accordance with 'Academic Misconduct Policy and Procedures' (Appendix D Annexe 4 of the Code of Practice on Assessment):

https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/media/livacuk/tgsd/code-of-practice-on-assessment/appendix_D_annex4_cop_assess.pdf

Acts that would be subject to the University's Disciplinary or Fitness to Practise procedures will be dealt with under those procedures:

<https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/student-administration/policies-procedures/conduct-discipline/>

<https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/media/livacuk/student-administration/student-administration-centre/documents/Fitness,to,Practise,Policy,and,Procedures.pdf>

The policy for dealing with plagiarism, collusion copying, submission of commissioned or procured work or dishonest use of data in research degrees is addressed in a separate policy document:

<https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/media/livacuk/tgsd/code-of-practice-on-assessment/appendix-4- PGR-CoP.pdf>

3. Definitions

The following definitions reflect those contained within Section 9 of the Code of Practice on Assessment and apply to all types of work submitted by students, including online assessments. Examples include, but are not limited to: written work, diagrams, designs, charts, multimedia production, programs, musical compositions or pictures.

3.1 Poor Academic Practice

Poor academic practice occurs where there has been a failure, due to lack of academic ability or understanding, to observe the expected standards associated with academic integrity when undertaking academic work. Examples of poor academic practice include but are not limited to; poor paraphrasing or inadequate referencing (including the inadequate referencing of content generated by Artificial Intelligence software when use is permitted).

3.2 Collusion

Collusion occurs when, unless with official approval (e.g. in the case of group projects), two or more students consciously collaborate in the preparation and production of work that is ultimately submitted by each student in an identical or substantially similar form and/or is represented by each to be the product of their individual efforts.

3.3 Copying

Copying occurs when a student consciously presents as their own work material copied directly from a fellow student or other person. It includes the passing-off of another's intellectual property or ideas as one's own. It differs from collusion in that the originator of the copied work is not aware of or party to the copying. Copying of work from published sources would be dealt with as plagiarism.

3.4 Submission of Commissioned or Procured Assessment Tasks

This example of dishonest practice occurs when a student submits, as their own work, assessment tasks (or parts thereof) that have been intentionally procured from third parties. The definition includes the practice of requesting another party to prepare all or part of a course assignment (with or without payment) on the student's behalf.

The definition also includes proofreading activities whereby a third party or software application exceeds the acceptable practice of identifying errors or inconsistencies in a course assignment by adding to or rewriting the student's existing content. Acceptable proof-reading practice would include the identification of typographical, grammatical or spelling errors, formatting or citation errors or inconsistencies, repetition or duplication of text, ambiguous wording, and mislabelling of graphs, diagrams etc. Unacceptable proof-reading practice would include adding to content, rewriting any content, checking or correcting facts, data, equations, etc. Further to this, the assignment brief should be clear on whether, or the extent to which, translation software or equivalent tools may be used.

3.5 Submission of Assessment Tasks Generated by Artificial Intelligence

This dishonest practice occurs when a student presents, assessment tasks (or parts thereof) that have been generated or completed by Generative Artificial Intelligence (GAI) software contrary to the guidance on using GAI¹:

¹ Each assignment brief should state whether the use of GAI is in line with the generic University position and where it is not, provide specific requirements of that assignment. If the use of GAI is not permitted within an assignment but the student uses it to produce work and then cites it, this is a case of acknowledged by unacceptable use as per 5.3.

<https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/media/livacuk/centre-for-innovation-in-education/digital-education/generative-ai-teach-learn-assess/guidance-on-the-use-of-gen-ai-learn-teach-assess.pdf>

GAI software, for the purposes of this policy, is defined as software applications that create content in any form (including but not limited to text, graphs, data, code, images, audio and video) automatically based on the prompt of the user.

3.6 Dishonest Use of Data

Throughout this policy the term “dishonest use of data” is used to cover one or more of the following:

Embellishment or Falsification of Data – occurs when a proportion of the total data is altered, enhanced or exaggerated in order to emphasise data which has been obtained by legitimate means.

Fabrication of Data – occurs when a student creates and presents an extensive amount or significant piece of data in order to conceal a lack of legitimate data, or wholly fabricates a set of data in the absence of legitimate data.

Unapproved Collection of Data – occurs when data is presented that has not been legitimately obtained, including data collected without relevant ethical approval, or collected beyond the scope of the obtained ethical approval.

In this context ‘data’ includes literature and sources.

3.7 Plagiarism

Plagiarism occurs when a student misrepresents the work or ideas of any other person (including another student) or of any institution, as their own work. Examples of forms of plagiarism include:

- the verbatim (word for word) copying of another’s work without appropriate and correctly presented acknowledgement and citation of the source;
- the close paraphrasing of another’s work by simply changing a few words, altering the order of presentation, or using software applications to paraphrase another’s work without appropriate and correctly presented acknowledgement and citation of the original source(s);
- the manual or machine translation of the work of any other person (including another student), or of any institution originally developed in a language other than English, without appropriate and correctly presented acknowledgement and citation of the original source. Where GAI has been used to translate work, citation for both the original work and the GAI application used should be provided;
- failure to reference appropriately or to adequately identify the source of material used;
- unacknowledged quotation of phrases from another’s work;
- the deliberate and detailed presentation of another’s concept as one’s own.

3.8 Self-Plagiarism / Re-use of work

Self-plagiarism is considered a breach of academic integrity and includes the reuse of material that the student has previously submitted for assessment, without appropriate acknowledgement or permission.

Students must not present work they have previously submitted for credit as if it is new, unless they have **explicit permission** and **appropriately reference** the prior work. This includes work submitted to the current course or for another qualification at this, or any other, university. This excludes resit tasks on the same assessment task, unless the resit assessment brief explicitly requires new materials. This rule also applies to those resitting a year of study.

The University treats the decision as to whether poor academic practice or unfair and/or dishonest academic practice has taken place as a matter for academic judgement² and the penalties applied will vary according to the individual case and the seriousness of the offence (for details of the range of penalties, see Section 5 below.)

4. Dealing with Academic Integrity Issues

- 4.1 Departments³ should require students, when submitting work for summative assessment, to provide either a signed hard-copy declaration or an equivalent acknowledgement where electronic submission is used, to confirm that they have not plagiarised nor copied material, nor have they embellished, fabricated nor falsified any of the data, nor have they colluded in producing the work, nor submitted commissioned or procured work, or are submitting work produced using artificial intelligence contrary to this policy and the guidance for acceptable and unacceptable use of GAI.
- 4.2 If the examiner identifies an academic integrity issue within a student's work, they should ensure that this is evidenced and documented and should then proceed as follows:
- 4.3 If the examiner identifies that a student has committed poor academic practice in which there is no evidence of dishonesty or intention to deceive, the examiner shall conclude that a Category 1 offence has occurred and shall apply the penalty as outlined in Section 5 below.
- 4.4 If the examiner suspects any form of academic misconduct in relation to work submitted by a student, they should inform the Academic Integrity Officer⁴ for the Department /School that owns that module as promptly as possible, who will undertake an investigation into the allegation on behalf of the Chair of the relevant Academic Integrity Committee.⁵

² It should be noted that where plagiarism or other another offence is indicated using detection software, Examiners, Assessment Integrity Officers and Board of Examiners must still exercise academic judgement in determining whether plagiarism or another offence has taken place.

³ The departmental responsibility referred to here should fall to the relevant appropriate body in the case of on-line programmes.

⁴ The corresponding officer for online programmes delivered in partnership with Kaplan Higher Education UK is the Director of Online Studies

⁵ Notwithstanding a referral for investigation, a raw mark for the assessment should be calculated and marked on the script.

- 4.5 Allegations about plagiarism, copying, collusion, submission of unacceptable artificial intelligence generated assessment tasks, dishonest use of data, unfair or dishonest academic practice in relation to work submitted by a student may also be raised by another member of academic staff (not the examiner) or a third party. Such concerns should be documented and supported by evidence. Anonymous allegations will not normally be investigated, but the chair of the Academic Integrity Committee should use their discretion as to if there are grounds for any investigation and if there are grounds, the chair should forward them to the Academic Integrity Officer to investigate. In cases of allegation from a third party, the Academic Integrity Officer for the Department /School that owns the relevant module should be notified of these concerns as promptly as possible, who will undertake an investigation into the allegation on behalf of the Chair of the relevant Academic Integrity Committee.
- 4.6 In undertaking their investigation, the Academic Integrity Officer will first check the student's record to ascertain if the student has a support plan which permits them to use particular software as a reasonable adjustment. The Academic Integrity Officer will also invite the examiner to provide evidence and reasons for their allegation.
- 4.7 When the Academic Integrity Officer is informed of an allegation, they will commence their investigation and will have up to 10 working days from this point to notify the student(s) of the investigation, including details of the alleged offence. The notification will include an invitation to the student(s) to contribute to the investigation by providing a written explanation of the circumstances surrounding the allegation and any representations they wish to make. The student will have 5 working days to respond. If a student chooses not to engage with the investigation, the investigation will proceed and a decision will be made based on the evidence available.
- 4.8 The Academic Integrity Officer may hold a meeting with the student(s). The student(s) should be given sufficient notice of any meeting, normally a minimum of three working days. The student(s) is entitled to be accompanied at any meeting by one other person (not party to the matters under investigation) acting as their friend. The Guild of Students Advice Centre (www.liverpoolguild.org/advice) has trained advisors who can provide this support and students are encouraged to use them. The student will also be provided with contact details of the University's Advice and Guidance Team (advice@liverpool.ac.uk) so they know how to access wellbeing support should they feel they need it.
- 4.9 A summary note of what is discussed during any meeting will be taken and following the meeting, the student will be provided with a copy of this note.
- 4.10 On completion of the investigation, the Academic Integrity Officer will produce an investigation report and evidence base and, will conclude that:
- (a) The evidence does not support that academic misconduct has likely occurred. The student(s) will be informed accordingly, and no further action is required; or
 - (b) The evidence supports that poor academic practice has likely occurred. The Academic Integrity Officer shall conclude that a Category 1 offence has occurred and shall apply a penalty in accordance with Section 5 below; or
 - (c) The evidence supports that plagiarism, copying, collusion, submission of unacceptable artificial intelligence generated assessment tasks, dishonest use

of data or unfair or dishonest academic practice has more likely than not occurred. The Academic Integrity Officer shall refer their investigation report and evidence base to the relevant Department/School Academic Integrity Committee (AIC) for further consideration⁶. A copy of the Academic Integrity Officer's report and evidence base will also be sent to the student(s).

The student(s) will have the opportunity to comment in writing on any factual inaccuracies within the report and/or remind staff of any personal extenuating circumstances which may justify a mitigated penalty (see 1.6). Staff may also consider as a mitigating factor that students admitted the offence promptly and/or showed remorse and consider (as 1.6) a lesser penalty.

- 4.11 In the case of 4.10(c) above, the Department/School Academic Integrity Committee shall review the investigation report and supporting evidence and will check the student's record to ascertain any previous Academic Integrity cases and/or warnings issued as well as review any comments on factual inaccuracies and mitigation against the implementation of a penalty provided and shall make a recommendation to the Board of Examiners regarding whether a breach of the academic integrity policy has taken place. If the AIC recommends that a breach of the academic integrity policy has taken place the AIC will also make a recommendation to the Board of Examiners regarding the category of offence that has taken place and the penalty to be applied in line with Section 5 below.
- 4.12 The Board of Examiners will consider the recommendations of the AIC and decide if it accepts that a breach of the Academic Integrity Policy has taken place and consider the recommendations of the AIC as to the category of the offence and the penalty to be applied. Neither the Academic Integrity Officer nor the examiner or any other member who considered the case at AIC can take part in the decision-making taken by the Board of Examiner.
- 4.13 The Board of Examiners should ensure that the minutes of the Board's meeting accurately record the decision-making process; if it rejects the recommendations of the AIC in whole or part, the rationale for this should be recorded in the minutes. The Board is also responsible for ensuring the decision is noted in the student's record, including their record on Banner.
- 4.14 The Chair of the Academic Integrity Committee should provide summary data on academic misconduct to the Head of Department, for inclusion in an annual report on academic misconduct to the relevant Faculty Academic Quality and Standards Committee/Faculty Education and Enhancement Committee. Faculties should then provide a report on matters of academic integrity to AQSC. The summary data should indicate:
- For Category 2, 3 and 4, the total number of proven cases by modules affected and by Category
 - The total number of Category 1 cases that resulted in the imposition of a penalty

⁶ The Academic Integrity Committee is a sub-committee of the Board of Examiners and should comprise at least three members of the Board of Examiners, one of whom may not be the Academic Integrity Officer.

5. Categories and Indicative Penalties

This section outlines the different categories of academic integrity offences as well as indicative penalties for each. Where there is any discretion or choice about the penalty to be applied, consideration may be given to the student's level and year of study, any previous history of academic misconduct, the weighting of the assessment, any aggravating factors including whether the student was dishonest or attempted to mislead the Academic Integrity Officer during the investigation, and the penalties that have previously been issued in similar cases, in order to maintain consistency and fairness.

Category 1: Poor Academic Practice

5.1 If a student is found to have committed poor academic practice:

- the assessment task mark shall be capped at the minimum pass grade for that assessment task by the examiner.
- the examiner should indicate the student's errors in the assessment feedback so that they can learn from their mistakes. The feedback should also indicate how the student could improve their practice;
- the examiner will recommend the student to complete an on-line Know How academic integrity tutorial and, if appropriate, an Artificial Intelligence Literacy tutorial;
- the mark penalty will be reported to the Academic Integrity Committee for note only and will be recorded by the Board of Examiners, and notified to the student;
- the student's entitlement to re-assessment in failed modules is not affected.

5.2 If poor academic practice is repeated by the student the mark penalty will be imposed for each multiple or subsequent example of poor academic practice. This creates a strong incentive for the student to avoid further penalty and should encourage the student to benefit from the advisory on-line Know How academic integrity tutorial or Artificial Intelligence Literacy tutorial. The completion of on-line tutorials will be registered.

Category 2: Plagiarism, Copying, Collusion, Submission of Unacceptable Artificial Intelligence Generated Assessment Tasks or Embellishment or Falsification of Data

5.3 This category is intended to capture instances of plagiarism, copying, collusion, submission of unacceptable **but acknowledged** artificial intelligence generated assessment tasks or embellishment or falsification of data, where the student has not received a prior written warning of misconduct (i.e. it is their first offence).

5.4 If two or more students are found to have colluded in producing a piece of assessed work (this includes one student allowing another to copy their work and submit it as their own), then each should receive the mark penalty for the assessment task. If one or more students are found to have copied the work of another student in any form without their knowledge, then any resulting warning and penalty should apply only to the student(s) that copied the work.

- 5.5 Normally, if a student is found to have committed a first offence of plagiarism, copying, collusion, submission of unacceptable artificial intelligence generated assessment tasks or embellishment or falsification of data:
- the assessment task should be given a mark of zero;
 - the student will be given a written warning about the need to observe the University's Academic Integrity Policy;
 - the student will be recommended to take or retake the on-line Know How academic integrity tutorial and, if appropriate, the Artificial Intelligence Literacy tutorial;
 - a note will be placed on the student's records, including their records in Banner⁷ detailing the nature of the offence, the action and the date of the issue of any written warning;
 - the student's entitlement to re-assessment in failed modules is not affected.
- 5.6 After five working days from the date of the first written warning, any subsequent work submitted by the student in which plagiarism, copying, collusion, submission of unacceptable artificial intelligence generated assessment tasks or embellishment or falsification of data have occurred will be treated as Category 3. Any offence detected in work submitted within the five UK working days from the first written warning will be treated as a Category 2 breach of the policy.
- 5.7 In the case of a student being awarded a mark of zero and as a result failing their dissertation or project, the Board of Examiners will decide whether they should be permitted to re-submit the dissertation or project, revised and corrected, or whether they must complete and submit a whole new dissertation or project.
- Category 3: Second or Subsequent Category 2 Offence(s) following a Written Warning
- 5.8 This category is intended to cover instances of plagiarism, copying, collusion, submission of unacceptable artificial intelligence generated assessment tasks or embellishment or falsification of data and the student has received a prior written warning of academic misconduct for such a category of offence dated more than five UK working days earlier.
- 5.9 If two or more students are found to have colluded in producing a piece of assessed work (this includes one student allowing another to copy their work and submit it as their own), then each should receive the mark penalty for the assessment task. If one or more students are found to have copied the work of another student in any form without their knowledge, then any resulting warning and penalty should apply only to the student(s) that copied the work.
- 5.10 Normally, if, after receiving a written warning, a student is found to have committed second or subsequent plagiarism, copying, collusion, submission of unacceptable

⁷ In respect of this and all references to Banner in this Policy it should be noted that for on-line programmes an alternative records system may be used.

artificial intelligence generated assessment tasks or embellishment or falsification of data:

- the student should be given zero for the module, regardless of any other assessment component marks for the module;
- the student will be given a second written warning about the need to observe the University's Academic Integrity Policy;
- the student will be recommended to take or retake the on-line Know How academic integrity tutorial and if relevant the Artificial Intelligence Literacy tutorial;
- a note will be placed on the student's records, including their records in Banner detailing the nature of the offence, the action and the date of the issue of any written warning;
- the student's entitlement to re-sit failed modules is not affected.

5.11 In the case of a student being awarded a mark of zero and as a result failing their dissertation or project, the Board of Examiners will decide whether they should be permitted to re-submit the dissertation or project, revised and corrected, or whether they must complete and submit a whole new dissertation or project.

Category 4: Unfair and/or Dishonest Academic Practice

5.12 This category covers inherently dishonest acts where a student intends to gain an advantage over other students by wilfully seeking to deceive assessors and/or examiners and where a clear intent to deceive and gain unfair advantage can be established. Examples include the use of purchased or commissioned work, the submission of unacceptable **and unacknowledged** artificial intelligence generated assessment tasks, unacceptable proof-reading practices, passing off as one's own work the work of another student or person, fabrication of data, and coercive collusion. The practices in this category are defined as those serious enough even as a first offence to warrant suspension or termination of studies and do not depend on a student's prior actions

5.13 In a case of submission of unacceptable and unacknowledged artificial intelligence generated assessment tasks and/ or data fabrication, this must be extensive to merit a Category 4 breach and it can be downgraded to category 2 based on the extent/severity – as judged by the AIC.

5.14 Normally the penalty to be applied for a Category 4 offence is a mark of zero for the module, regardless of any other assessment component marks for the module **and** either:

- Suspension of studies for a period not exceeding one academic session⁸, or
- Termination of studies, with credit awarded for what has already been

⁸ In the event of suspension, the mark penalty and conditions laid out in section 5.10 should also be applied to the affected module.

passed without unfair and/or dishonest academic practice; or

- For an undergraduate project or postgraduate dissertation or project, a mark of zero for the module in which the offence occurred and a reassessment of the project or dissertation on a different topic. If an academic integrity breach occurs on this subsequent reassessment attempt, a mark of zero for the module and consideration of an exit award

In deciding on the period of time to suspend studies for, as referred to in 5.14 above, suspension timeframes should consider the impact on progress in the same academic year e.g. should not be taken during assessment periods. The rationale for the period of suspension applied should be recorded to ensure consistency. In making a judgement as to whether to suspend a student or terminate their studies consideration should be given to the seriousness of the offence and in this exceptional circumstance whether previous breaches of Academic Integrity have taken place during their period of registration, and the extent of the student engagement with the Academic Integrity process.

With regards a finding of unfair or dishonest academic practice, in exceptional circumstances and if the Chair and the Board of Examiners is satisfied with the findings detailed in the report, the Board can arrange for other work submitted by the student(s) for assessment to be scrutinised for other instances of unfair or dishonest academic practice. The Board of Examiners can only scrutinise other work by the student that is from the year of study in which the offence took place⁹ ; the Board cannot review work from a previous year (or years) of study which the student has already passed.

6. Right of Appeal

- 6.1 Students may appeal against the decision of the Board of Examiners in relation to a Category 2, 3 or 4 decision but only on the grounds that there was a procedural error in determining a decision in the conduct of the investigation into the alleged offence. Students may not appeal against the decision of the Board of Examiners other than in accordance with the Code of Practice on Assessment, Appendix F, Assessment Appeals Procedure: <https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/aqsd/academic-codes-of-practice/code-of-practice-on-assessment/>

[Assessment appeals Assessment appeals- Student Administration - University of Liverpool](#)

7. Academic Integrity and Fitness to Practise

- 7.1 For some vocational and/or professional programmes there may be requirements for students to meet specified standards in respect of their fitness to practise in the relevant vocation or profession. Where a finding of poor academic practice or unfair and/or dishonest plagiarism, collusion, submission of unacceptable Artificial Intelligence Generated assessment tasks and/or dishonest use of data against a student may call into question the student's fitness to practise, this must be clearly stated in the programme information provided to students.

⁹ For students on programmes delivered online in partnership with Kaplan Higher Education UK the period would be that since the last Board of Examiners at which marks were confirmed.