



# **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY**

## **GUIDELINES FOR STUDENTS**

**2021-22**

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

Please note that this document is for guidance purposes only and the University’s formal policy, arrangements and procedures are contained in the document **Code of Practice on Assessment Appendix L – Academic Integrity Policy** which takes precedence over this guidance.

## **INTRODUCTION**

The coursework that you submit throughout the year is as important as the formal examinations taken at the end of modules. Coursework assessment tasks or assignments enable you to demonstrate your true understanding of a topic, your ability to reflect your evaluation of the ideas of others and your ability to express your own original thoughts or conclusions. These are the kind of general academic skills and abilities that examiners/markers are looking for and you will do well in assessments if you have developed good academic practice.

Good academic practice takes time and effort to get right. It requires you to take responsibility for the authenticity of your work and for following the conventions for acknowledging your use of the work of others. In observing good academic practice, you will be demonstrating your

- Honesty and integrity
- Trustworthiness
- Respect for the wider academic community and your fellow students
- Fairness, knowing that you have truly earned the marks awarded for your work and that you have not used unfair means to gain an advantage

At the start of your programme you might be inexperienced in referencing information that has been obtained from another source, without any deliberate intent to deceive. Some students might come from academic education systems where plagiarism (as it is known in the UK) is not considered wrong and can even be considered a mark of respect to the original author. Some students may not feel sufficiently confident to assimilate and represent the views of the original author and so lift wording directly from the text. Sometimes students can plagiarise without being aware that they are quoting another source. For example, students may repeat ideas from a textbook or a lecture without even being aware that they are doing so, and so do not reference the source.

Sometimes poor academic practice or academic misconduct arise because students think they have insufficient time to complete an assignment, lack confidence in writing skills, or are juggling multiple assessment submission deadlines. If you are struggling with your academic work or with managing multiple deadlines you should contact your academic adviser at the earliest opportunity so that you can be directed to appropriate sources of help and support.

The University has a series of helpful online tutorials and workshops, called 'Know How', which can help you to understand good academic practice and avoid you getting into difficulties - <https://libguides.liverpool.ac.uk/KnowHow>.

## **DEFINITIONS**

The University recognises a range of inappropriate academic practices from minor errors due to inexperience to serious attempts to deceive markers and examiners. Definitions of the types of misconduct are detailed in Appendix L to the Code of Practice on Assessment. You should read these carefully to make sure you understand what is acceptable practice and what is not. The definitions below apply to all types of work submitted by students, including, for example, written work, diagrams, designs, charts, musical compositions and pictures.

## **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY SCHEME**

The intent of the Academic Integrity Scheme is to create a clear, effective and easily explained categorisation, in which poor practice is distinguished from unfair and dishonest practice, and in which the former attracts a largely remedial response.

**POOR PRACTICE**

<b>Cat</b>	<b>Definition and examples</b>	<b>Determined by</b>	<b>Consequences</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>A</b>	Minor error (missing quotation mark, minor mistakes in referencing)	Internal examiner	<p><u>Mark penalty</u> (up to 10% of maximum mark), as laid out in the marking scheme, with clear feedback on how to avoid error in the future.</p> <p>Normal re-assessment regulations apply</p>	It would be possible for the mark penalty to take the mark below the pass threshold but not below the compensation threshold.
<b>B</b>	Poor academic practice (poor paraphrasing, inadequate referencing)	Internal examiner  Reported to Board of Examiners	<p><u>Assignment mark is capped</u> at minimum pass grade for assignment (40 for UG, 50 for PGT)</p> <p>Advisory on-line Know How academic integrity tutorial</p> <p>Normal re-assessment regulations apply</p>	<p>This category covers a range of poor practices in which there is no clear intention to deceive. It can be repeated, as the mark penalty is imposed for each subsequent example of poor academic practice; this creates a strong incentive to avoid further penalty and should encourage students to benefit from the remedial effect of the online tutorial.</p> <p>Students repeatedly receiving penalties are strongly advised to contact their academic advisor and to look at the Know How resources.</p> <p>Completion of the online tutorial is registered.</p>
<b>C</b>	Plagiarism, copying, collusion or dishonest use of data	Internal examiner and investigation  Referred to the Academic Integrity Committee	<p>First written warning issued with student's copy of the investigation report.</p> <p><u>0% for the assignment</u> applied by the Board of Examiners</p> <p>Advisory on-line Know How academic integrity tutorial</p>	<p>This category is intended to capture first offences in which academic misconduct has occurred but intent to deceive cannot be established because the student has not received a prior written warning of misconduct.</p> <p>It is possible for multiple and concurrent category</p>

**CODE OF PRACTICE ON ASSESSMENT – APPENDIX L ANNEXE 1**  
**Academic Integrity Policy – Guidance for Students**  
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Cat	Definition and examples	Determined by	Consequences	Comments
			<p>After seven calendar days from the date of the first written warning the stronger Category D penalties will automatically apply to any work subsequently submitted in which plagiarism, collusion, copying or dishonest use of data have occurred</p> <p>Normal re-assessment regulations apply</p>	<p>C offences to take place, and in each instance the mark penalty for the assignment would be applied, until the student has received their first written warning at which point the next offence would become Category D.</p> <p>The date of the first written warning about the offence is recorded, and the student's completion of the online Know How academic integrity module is registered. Students would be advised in the warning letter that failure to take the opportunity to improve their academic practice by completing the online tutorial could put them at risk of a recommendation of a category D penalty for a subsequent offence.</p>

**UNFAIR AND DISHONEST PRACTICE AND RESEARCH MISCONDUCT**

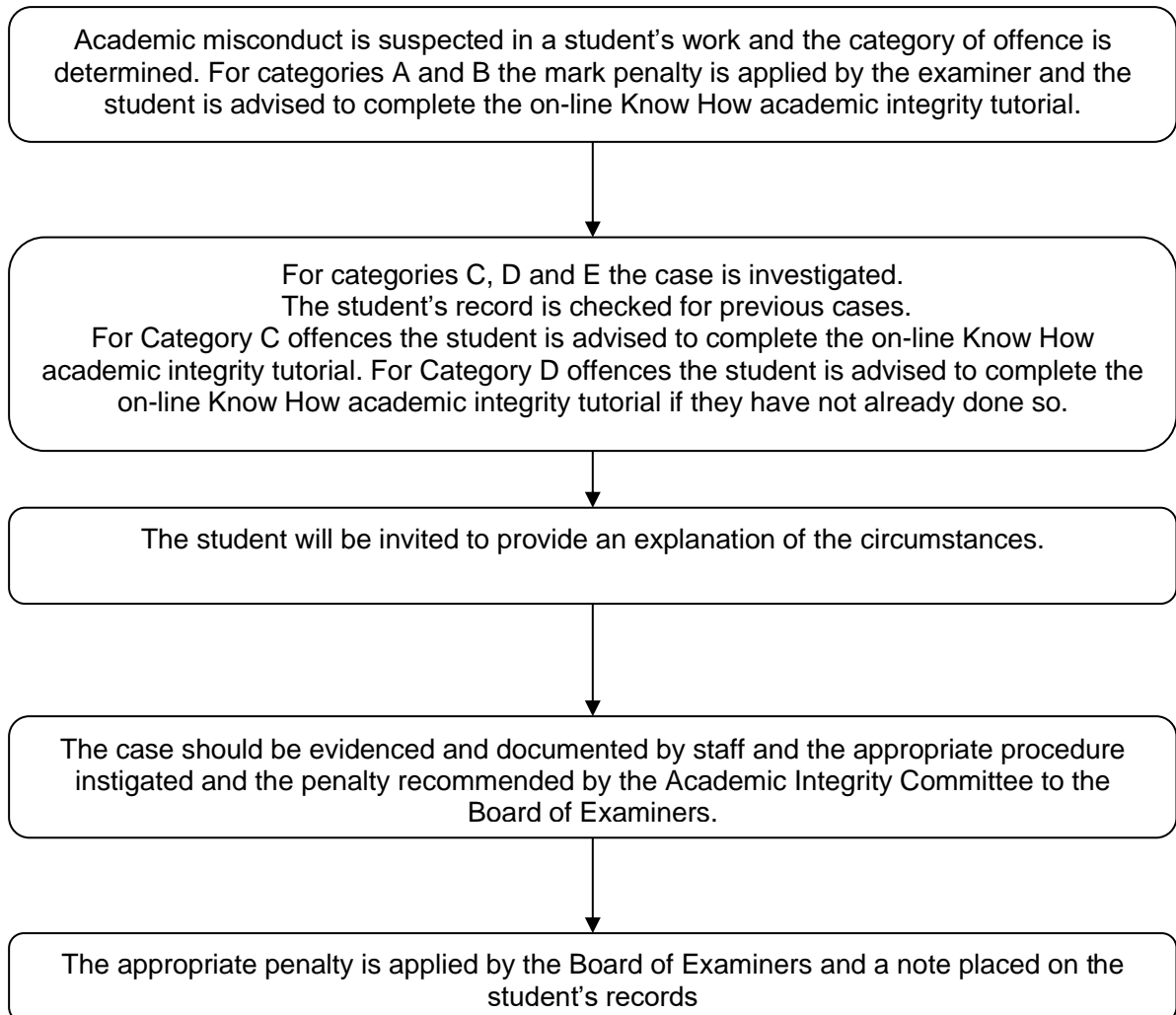
Unfair and dishonest practice occurs when a student intends to gain an advantage over other students by wilfully seeking to deceive assessors and/or examiners. Such acts are often but not always premeditated and would include offences subsequent to a prior written warning of academic misconduct

<b>Cat</b>	<b>Definition and examples</b>	<b>Determined by</b>	<b>Consequences</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>D</b>	A second or subsequent Category C offence following the first written warning (thereby an intent to deceive)	Internal examiner and investigation  Referred to the Academic Integrity Committee	Second written warning  <u>0% for the module</u> applied by the Board of Examiners  Normal re-assessment regulations apply	It is possible for multiple and concurrent category D offences to take place, and in each instance the mark penalty for the module would be applied. If a student accumulates sufficient modules with 0% due to multiple Category D offences then the Board of Examiners could exercise its right to terminate studies due to a lack of satisfactory progress.
<b>E</b>	Serious malpractice (a clear intent to deceive and gain unfair advantage, such as the use of commissioned or purchased coursework, unacceptable proofreading practice, clear fabrication and falsification of data, research misconduct, the attempt to pass off another person's dissertation or thesis as one's own, or highly organised collusion)	Internal examiner and investigation  Referred to the Academic Integrity Committee	For research misconduct, a mark of zero for the module in which the misconduct occurred and a reassessment of a project or dissertation on a different topic, If the misconduct occurs on this subsequent reassessment attempt, a mark of zero for the module and consideration of an exit award  Board of Examiners applies either <u>suspension of studies</u> or <u>termination of studies</u> (with recognition of academic credit already passed without unfair and dishonest academic practice)  A mark of zero for the module will be applied	The practices in this category are defined as those serious enough even as a first offence to warrant termination, and do not depend upon prior actions.  Some practices, such as coercion, would invoke other University disciplinary procedures

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			regardless of any other assessment component marks for the module.	
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## **THE PROCEDURE FOR BREACHES OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**



**Please note that these guidelines apply to undergraduate and postgraduate taught provision only; there is a separate policy document for postgraduate research programmes.**

## **1. MINOR ERRORS**

- 1.1. If an examiner<sup>1</sup> finds that you have made a minor error in the presentation of your academic work, as defined in Appendix L to the Code of Practice on Assessment, they will point out that error to you so that you can learn from it and they will give you feedback on how to improve your practice. The mark penalty that can be applied to the assessment task for such an error will be set out in the marking criteria for the module which will have been provided to you. The maximum mark penalty is 10% of the total marks available for the assessment task.
- 1.2. It is possible that the mark penalty could reduce your mark below the pass threshold but should not take it below the compensation threshold.
- 1.3. Your re-assessment entitlement if you fail the module will not be affected.

## **2. POOR ACADEMIC PRACTICE**

- 2.1. If an examiner finds that you have exercised poor academic practice, as defined in Appendix L to the Code of Practice on Assessment, they will point out the fault(s) to you and they will give you feedback on how to improve your practice. The penalty that can be applied to the assessment task for such a fault is the capping of the mark at the pass grade (usually 40% for undergraduate modules and 50% for postgraduate modules).
- 2.2. The examiner will recommend that you take an on-line Know How academic integrity tutorial on academic practice as this will help you to improve. Your completion of this tutorial will be electronically registered.
- 2.3. If you continue to get category B penalties you are strongly recommended to contact your academic adviser for advice and guidance.
- 2.4. The incident itself will be reported to the Board of Examiners for confirmation. Your re-assessment entitlement if you fail the module will not be affected.

## **3. PLAGIARISM, COPYING, COLLUSION OR DISHONEST USE OF DATA**

- 3.1. The University takes very seriously attempts by students to gain an unfair advantage by breaking the rules on academic assessments. If an examiner finds that you have committed an offence of plagiarism, copying, collusion or dishonest use of data, in accordance with the definitions of these terms in Appendix L to the Code of Practice on Assessment, an investigation will be carried out.
- 3.2. You should be aware that any application to be admitted into a regulated profession may be put at risk if you have committed academic misconduct in order to gain an advantage for yourself.
- 3.3. You will be informed of an allegation of plagiarism, copying, collusion, or dishonest use of data and you will be given the chance to explain the circumstances of the alleged offence and to make any representations you wish. You may provide this in writing or at any meeting

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<sup>1</sup> In respect of this and all other references in these guidelines it should be noted that the 'examiner' is the person responsible for marking an assessment.



called by the Academic Integrity Officer<sup>2</sup>. If a meeting is held, it will be conducted by the Academic Integrity Officer for the department or school that owns the module, and the examiner who raised the allegation will normally be present; if you wish, you may bring another member of the University to attend this meeting with you, such as a fellow student or a representative of the Liverpool Guild of Students. You should be given at least three working days' notice of the meeting so that you can arrange representation. The Guild Advice Service (<https://www.liverpoolguild.org/main-menu/advice/academic>) can also provide you with independent advice and support with this process.

- 3.4. After considering your representations and the evidence from the examiner, if the Academic Integrity Officer finds plagiarism, copying, collusion or dishonest use of data have been committed, they will produce a report for the Academic Integrity Committee. The report will explain the circumstances of the offence; the investigation undertaken; the representations made by you and the findings of the Academic Integrity Officer and their recommendation on mark penalties. You will receive a copy of this report along with a written warning and a recommendation that you complete the on-line Know How academic integrity tutorial. A copy of the report will also be sent to the Academic Integrity Officer for your department or school if the module concerned belongs to another department or school.
- 3.5. The Academic Integrity Committee will consider whether the findings of the Academic Integrity Officer are appropriate and acceptable. If so, the Academic Integrity Committee will recommend to the Board of Examiners a mark penalty to be applied as follows:
  - a. **First offence** – mark of zero for the assignment or assessment task. This will be applied even if the module has only one assignment weighted at 100% of the assessment.
  - b. **Second or subsequent offence** – a mark of zero for the module.
- 3.6. If it is your first offence, the recommendation of a mark penalty for the assessment task will be made and you will get a written warning when you receive the copy of the investigation report. The fact that plagiarism, copying, collusion or dishonest use of data has been found in your work and that you have been issued with a warning will be noted in your student records, including your Banner<sup>3</sup> records.
- 3.7. After a period of seven calendar days from the date of the first written warning any subsequent offences will be considered more severely. Each allegation will be investigated as outlined in paragraphs 3.2 - 3.4 above and a report to the Chair of the Board of Examiners made by the Academic Integrity Committee with a recommendation for the more severe penalty of zero for the module. You will receive a further written warning with the copy of the investigation report. Mark penalties for the module will be recommended for each and every subsequent offence.
- 3.8. If a Category D offence is found then you should continue to complete the remaining assessments in the module as the penalty will not be decided until the Board of Examiners meets at the end of the assessment period.
- 3.9. If you have colluded with another student or students, and this includes one student allowing another to copy their work and submit it as their own, each of you will be awarded a mark of zero for the assessment or module.

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<sup>2</sup> In respect of this and all references to the Academic Integrity Officer in these guidelines it should be noted that the corresponding officer for on-line programmes is the Programme Director of Online Studies

<sup>3</sup> In respect of this and all references to Banner in these guidelines it should be noted that for on-line programmes an alternative records system may be used.

- 3.10. Your entitlement to be re-assessed in failed modules is not affected. If, as a result of receiving zero for an assessment task you fail the module as a whole, or if you receive zero for the module as a whole, you may be required to re-sit the assessments unless you are in the final year of an undergraduate degree programme, in which case you will only be permitted to re-sit the assessment if failing the module would result in you being awarded a pass degree or being awarded no degree. You should note that if there is no re-sit opportunity provided for the assessment for which you are awarded zero and you have failed the module, you may have to retake the assessment with attendance and your progression to your next year of study may be delayed. You should also note that if you accumulate a number of failed modules then the Board of Examiners can exercise its right to terminate your studies due to a lack of satisfactory progress.

#### **4. UNFAIR AND DISHONEST ACADEMIC PRACTICE AND RESEARCH MISCONDUCT**

- 4.1. You should read the policy carefully to make sure you understand what unfair and dishonest practice means. When assignments have been set that require you to do research you should check with your module leader whether or not you will need ethics approval for this research. Your tutor can explain the processes for such approval and the limitations it might impose on your work.
- 4.2. The academic malpractices in this category are those considered to be the most serious even as a first offence and are those clearly intended to deceive and to gain a student an unfair advantage. You should be aware that any application to be admitted to a regulated profession may be at risk if you have committed academic misconduct in order to gain an advantage for yourself.
- 4.3. If an examiner finds that you have committed unfair and dishonest academic practice an investigation will be carried out. You will be informed of the allegation and given the chance to explain the circumstances of the alleged offence and to make any representations you wish. You may provide this in writing or request a meeting. You should receive at least three working days' notice of such a meeting. The meeting will be conducted by the Academic Integrity Officer for the department or school which owns the module, and the examiner who raised the allegation will be present; if you wish, you may bring another member of the University to attend this meeting with you, such as a fellow student or a representative of the Liverpool Guild of Students. The Guild Advice Service (<https://www.liverpoolguild.org/main-menu/advice/academic>) can also provide you with independent advice and support with this process.
- 4.4. After considering your representations and the evidence from the examiner, if the Academic Integrity Officer finds that unfair and dishonest academic practice has been committed, they will produce a report for the Academic Integrity Committee. The report will explain the circumstances of the offence; the investigation undertaken; the representations made by you, the student; and detail the findings of the Academic Integrity Officer. You will receive a copy of this report. A copy of the report will also be sent to the Academic Integrity Officer for your department or school if the module concerned belongs to another department or school.
- 4.5. At the Academic Integrity Committee the members will decide whether the findings of the Academic Integrity Officer are appropriate and acceptable. If the Committee is satisfied with the findings, it may recommend to the Board of Examiners that other work submitted by you for assessment is scrutinised to determine if there are any previously undetected instances of unfair and dishonest academic practice. The Academic Integrity Committee on behalf of the Board of Examiners can only scrutinise other work by you that is from the year of study in which the unfair and dishonest academic practice occurred; the Committee cannot review

work from a previous year (or years) of study which you have already passed. The Academic Integrity Committee will make a recommendation to the Board of Examiners on the penalty to be applied. The Board of Examiners will ensure that details of the offence are noted in your student records, including the Banner records.

- 4.6. If the Board of Examiners finds that you have committed unfair and dishonest academic practice the penalties to be applied are one of
- a. zero for the module in which research misconduct occurred (with a reassessment opportunity but on a different topic),
  - b. suspension of studies
  - c. termination of studies.

In the event of suspension of studies, the category D penalty and conditions will be applied to the affected module. In the event of termination of studies, the Board of Examiners will determine whether any award should be made to you.

## **5. FITNESS TO PRACTISE**

- 5.1. Some vocational and/or professional programmes may require students to meet specified standards in respect of their fitness to practise in the relevant vocation or profession. This could mean that any finding of plagiarism, copying, collusion and/or dishonest use of data or any finding of unfair and dishonest academic practice or research misconduct may call into question your fitness to practise. If this is the case, it will be stated in the programme information provided to you.

## **6. CAN YOU APPEAL?**

- 6.1. You may only appeal against the findings of the examiner or the Academic Integrity Officer on the grounds of a procedural irregularity in the conduct of the investigation into the offence.

You may not appeal against the decision of the Board of Examiners other than in accordance with the Code of Practice on Assessment, Appendix E Guide on the Progress of Students on Taught Programmes of Study or Appendix F, Assessment Appeals Procedure; available via the following link: <https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/aqsd/academic-codes-of-practice/code-of-practice-on-assessment/>