

## ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT POLICY

### Introduction

1. The University of Suffolk has a duty to maintain academic standards by ensuring the integrity of all aspects of the assessment process and is confirming that the regulations and policies governing the assessment of courses at the University are fully and fairly implemented. To this end, the University will take action against any student who contravenes these regulations and policies, whether inadvertently or through negligence or deliberate intent, and who, by so doing, could gain unfair advantage over other students. This aligns with the [Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education's \(QAA\) Quality Code Advice and Guidance for assessment](#) that requires institutions to ensure that “students do not obtain credit or awards through any form of unacceptable academic practice relating to assessment.”

2. The University also recognises its responsibility stated in the Quality Code advice and guidance to “implement effective measures to encourage students to develop and internalise academic values and good academic practice.”

### Scope

3. This policy applies to all students enrolled on undergraduate and taught postgraduate courses at the University of Suffolk and its partner institutions. It covers academic misconduct in any form of assessment including written examinations, assessed coursework (in whatever form the coursework might take) and oral/practical assessments.

4. There is no time limit beyond which academic misconduct will not be investigated, although prompt referral of allegations is essential. Suspected academic misconduct, whether discovered before or after graduation, will be investigated and dealt with in accordance with this policy. Where academic misconduct is proven after work has been formally assessed, this may lead to the withdrawal of credit previously ratified by an Assessment Board or withdrawal of a conferred award.

5. In addition to consideration under this policy, all proven offences of academic misconduct by students on courses leading to professional registration will be considered by the Assessment Board to determine whether further action should be taken under the Fitness to Practise Procedure.

6. Depending on the nature of the offence, students may also be subject to additional action under the Student Discipline Procedure.

## Principles

7. The University of Suffolk bases its Policy on the expectations and core practices of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (2018) and the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) Good Practice Framework for Disciplinary Procedures (2018).

8. Academic integrity is the basis for ethical decision-making and behaviour in an academic context. This is reflected in norms of acceptable academic practice (see paragraphs 16 to 18 below) and is informed by the values of honesty, trust, responsibility, fairness, respect and courage.

9. The University endeavours to ensure that all policies, procedures and guidance relevant to academic integrity are clear, accessible and actively promoted.

10. The University will work with students to strive towards early achievement of academic integrity. We recognise that students who are new to higher education will need some time to achieve this goal. For these early stages this policy reflects the intention to address poor academic practice through pedagogical, formative approaches.

11. The University will support students so that they can take responsibility in the process of familiarisation with the rules governing assessment including conduct in examinations and the correct academic conventions for referencing and acknowledging the work of others.

12. Ultimately, it is the student's responsibility to avoid infringements of regulations and policies and to ensure that they have behaved with academic integrity. Ignorance of this policy cannot be used to excuse infringements.

13. The University will act on all identified infringements of this policy whether inadvertently or through negligence or deliberate intent.

14. The University expects that all work submitted for assessment by students is the student's own work, without falsification of any kind.

15. Allegations of academic misconduct will be treated in the strictest confidence. No student will be recorded, or referred to, as having committed an academic misconduct offence until the full process (as detailed in paragraphs 39 to 84) has been completed and the allegation proven.

### **Good Academic Practice**

16. Key aspects of good academic practice include:

- acknowledging the ideas of others through appropriate referencing and citation
- meeting expectations about ethical behaviour
- fulfilling confidentiality requirements in particular subjects
- understanding the permitted boundaries between individual and group contributions
- meeting expectations regarding academic conduct and the professional values of academia.

17. Students are expected to offer their own analysis and presentation of information gleaned from research, even when group exercises are carried out. Insofar as students rely on sources, they should reference these in accordance with the appropriate convention in their discipline.

### **Definition of Poor Academic Practice**

18. Poor academic practice can be defined as poor scholarship resulting from an individual's lack of knowledge, understanding and practice of the skills required to be academically literate.

19. For the purposes of this policy the understanding of poor academic practice is based on the following considerations:

- A student in their early stages of HE (level 3 and 4) or without recent experience of HE in the UK may not have gained the knowledge and skills to demonstrate standards of good academic practice.
- Instances of unintended plagiarism, or collusion, as defined below, that occur at the early stages of a student's studies can normally be considered as poor academic practice.
- A student who shows intent to meet good academic practice, but fails in its execution, can be considered to show poor academic practice.
- A student who shows limited intent to meet good academic practice in spite of having had adequate prior teaching, or as a repeat instance, can be deemed to show academic misconduct.

20. Addressing cases of poor academic practice requires supportive, constructive and pedagogical approaches by course teams and members of the learning support services, working with the active participation of the student.

### **Definition of Academic Misconduct**

21. The University employs the OIA definition of academic misconduct as provided in its [good practice framework for disciplinary procedures](#): "Any action by a student which gives or has the

potential to give an unfair advantage in an examination or assessment or might assist someone else to gain an unfair advantage, or any activity likely to undermine the integrity essential to scholarship and research.”

22. Academic misconduct typically falls under one of the following headings:

- Plagiarism
- Collusion
- Contract Cheating
- Fabrication
- Cheating
- Failure to have ethical approval

### **Plagiarism**

23. Plagiarism is defined as the presentation of another person’s work or ideas as the student’s own, without proper acknowledgement. This could be in direct copy or close paraphrase.

24. In the context of the policy, another person’s work or ideas includes text, images (graphics, illustrations or photographs), designs, computer code, diagrams, data and formulae or any other representation of ideas (written, visual or oral) in print, electronic or other media, and may be from any published or unpublished source including books, journals, newspapers, the internet, course handouts or another student’s work.

25. Plagiarism can occur in examinations and/or coursework assessment which may take a variety of forms including, but not limited to, essays, reports, presentations, dissertations and projects.

26. The reproduction of a student’s own previously submitted work, without acknowledgement, is regarded as self-plagiarism and will be treated in the same way as any other form of plagiarism.

27. Guidance on sources of evidence to evaluate cases of suspected plagiarism is set out in Appendix C.

### **Collusion**

28. Collusion is the unauthorised co-operation between at least two people, normally with the intent to deceive. It can take the following forms:

- a. the conspiring by two or more students to produce a piece of work together with the

- intention that at least one passes it off as their own work;
- b. the willing provision of previously assessed work or examination questions and/or answers by one student to another student where it should be evident to the student providing the work that by so doing an advantage could be gained by the other student. In this case both students are guilty of collusion;
  - c. the unauthorised co-operation between a student and another person in the preparation and production of work which is presented as the student's own work;

Guidance on sources of evidence to evaluate cases of suspected collusion is set out in Appendix C.

### **Contract Cheating**

29. Contract cheating is the commissioning and submission of work as the student's own where the student has paid or solicited another person to produce the work on the student's behalf. This includes the use of third party services such as essay mills and essay banks.

30. Contract cheating can also include the use of artificial intelligence systems to generate some or all of a submission subsequently presented as the student's own work.

31. In addition, contract cheating can also include sections of work that are improved by third parties, either for payment or for free.

32. While the use of proofreading services to help students identify deficiencies in their work does not constitute contract cheating, students must retain ownership of their work, and allowing third parties such as proof-readers to edit the work themselves could be deemed as contract cheating.

33. Guidance on sources of evidence to evaluate cases of suspected contract cheating are set out in Appendix C.

### **Fabrication**

34. Fabrication is the invention, alteration or falsification of data and evidence that contributes towards assessment. This includes data such as: the origin and results of questionnaires; research data; certificated or portfolio evidence in claims for the recognition of prior learning; and entries and signatures in records of assessment of practice in the workplace.

35. Where a student enrolled on a course leading to professional registration is alleged to have committed an offence of fabrication, the student may instead or additionally be subject to

action under the Fitness to Practise Procedure.

36. Allegations of fabrication of research data may instead or additionally be considered under the Research Misconduct Policy.

### **Cheating**

37. Cheating includes any behaviour which the student would reasonably know would interfere with the fair operation of the assessment process and could gain unfair advantage, such as:

- any transgression of the University's examination room rules, as set out in the Regulations for the Preparation and Conduct of Examinations;
- obtaining or seeking to obtain access to examination papers prior to an examination;
- behaviour in a manner likely to prejudice the chances of another student in an assessment;
- offering a bribe or inducement to invigilators, examiners or other persons connected with the assessments;
- being party to an arrangement whereby a person other than the student would fraudulently represent them at an assessment;
- submitting a fraudulent claim for extenuating circumstances.

### **Failure to have ethical approval**

38. Failure to have ethical approval includes instances where students embark on research activities which require ethical approval without that approval being formally granted. It is the student's responsibility to apply for ethical approval and to seek clarification on whether ethical approval is required if unsure. Allegations of failure to have ethical approval may instead or additionally be considered under the Research Misconduct Policy.

## **PROCESS FOR DEALING WITH SUSPECTED CASES OF ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT (STAGE 1: COURSE TEAM ACTIVITY)**

39. All potential instances of poor academic practice or academic misconduct will require action.

40. All suspected infringements must be reported to the Course Leader (or equivalent at our partners) for consideration before any allegation of academic misconduct is put to the student. Where the suspected infringement is discovered by the Course Leader (for example in work submitted for a module they teach), they may discuss their suspicions with the Head of Subject, the School's Associate Dean for Learning and Teaching, Dean of School (or equivalent in partner

institutions), or the Office for Student Appeals, Complaints and Conduct (OSACC).

41. It is the responsibility of the person identifying the suspected infringement to clearly set out the nature of their suspicions and provide supporting evidence showing how and where the suspected infringement has taken place.

42. Where a marker suspects an infringement, they will, if appropriate, note on the student's work the nature of the alleged offence and report their concerns to the Course Leader (or equivalent).

43. Where an invigilator suspects a student of infringing examination room rules or any other requirements relating to the conduct of the examination, they shall take the appropriate action as detailed in the Regulations for the Preparation and Conduct of Examinations. A report of the incident should be provided to the Exams Office, who will inform the Course Leader (or equivalent).

44. Any suspected infringement should be reported to the Course Leader (or equivalent) as soon as possible after initial discovery, and normally no later than fifteen working days after the relevant submission or examination date to allow time for consideration by the Course Leader before the normal release of feedback to students.

#### **Consideration by the Course Leader (or equivalent)**

45. Upon receipt of any reports of suspected infringement, the Course Leader will consider the evidence provided and decide how to proceed. Training and guidelines for the consideration of suspected academic misconduct will be provided to all Course Leaders/staff at our partners responsible for the consideration of instances of academic misconduct.

46. It is important for Course Leaders (or equivalent) to be aware that in some instances, and particularly in the early stages of a course, it will not always be appropriate to proceed to a formal allegation. If the assessed work, or student's conduct, can be considered as poor academic practice then it should not normally be considered as a potential case of academic misconduct. The Course Leader should also satisfy themselves that the student has been given appropriate advice on attributing sources and the production of bibliographies prior to assessment.

47. In considering second or subsequent instances of poor academic practice, the Course Leader (or equivalent) may decide to proceed to a formal allegation, however:

- Concurrent instances of infringements should be treated as one instance.

- Repeat infringements may still be treated as poor academic practice if the student has not had sufficient time to engage with academic support.
- Repeat infringements can be deemed to be academic misconduct if:
- the student has failed to engage with academic support, or
- the principle of unfair advantage is breached.

48. Having reviewed the evidence, the Course Leader (or equivalent) will decide that either:

- no offence has been committed;
- there is insufficient evidence of an offence;
- no offence has been committed but there is evidence of poor academic practice; or
- there is sufficient evidence of academic misconduct.

49. Records should be maintained, in line with GDPR requirements, to enable the identification and monitoring of students who have been judged to have demonstrated poor academic practice. These records will be made available to the relevant assessment board. Anonymised data on instances of poor academic practice will be monitored in line with OIA recommendations.

#### **Actions if no offence has been deemed to have been committed**

50. If the Course Leader (or equivalent) decides that no offence has taken place, or that there is insufficient evidence of an offence, they shall request the marker to consider the work on its academic merits and mark it in accordance with the assessment criteria. They may also recommend that the student is made aware of the concerns and offered further support and guidance to avoid any similar concerns about their academic practice in future. This advice, along with details of where to go for further support, should be given to the student with the feedback on their assessment. No further action will be taken with the student.

#### **Actions if poor academic practice is deemed to have been committed**

51. If the Course Leader (or equivalent) decides that the case constitutes poor academic practice, they shall:

- a. request the marker to consider the work on its academic merits and mark it in accordance with the assessment criteria;
- b. ensure that the feedback to the student identifies their poor academic practice and how this can be addressed; and
- c. issue the student with an informal warning about their academic practice and require them to engage with appropriate Academic Learning Services support and/or to complete the online academic skills course where available.



### **Actions if academic misconduct is deemed to have been committed**

52. If the Course Leader (or equivalent) decides that there is sufficient evidence that an offence may have been committed, they shall proceed to a formal allegation.

53. To proceed to a formal allegation, the Course Leader (or equivalent) should:

- a. complete the Allegation of Academic Misconduct form with the following information:
  - the student's name, ID number, level of study and course/programme/route details;
  - module details, including information about the weighting of the component of assessment;
  - the formal allegation to be put to the student;
  - a summary of the alleged offence.
- b. collate the relevant supporting evidence, with the assistance of the Academic Administrator (or equivalent). This may include:
  - a report of the incident, where relevant;
  - the invigilator's report, where relevant;
  - a copy, or the original of, unauthorised material used in an examination;
  - a copy of the original script marked with the allegedly plagiarised passages or passages where there is suspected collusion;
  - a copy of source material marked with passages which have allegedly been plagiarised or where there is suspected collusion;
  - a copy of the plagiarism detection software report, where relevant;
  - a copy of the instructions given to the student regarding the component of assessment and a copy of the referencing instructions given to the student where relevant;
  - a copy of any relevant material that has allegedly been fabricated (for example: the record of practice or work-based evidence; research data; and certificated or portfolio evidence in claims for recognition of prior learning);
  - any other evidence to support the allegation.

Where an allegation of collusion implicates more than one student, an allegation of Academic Misconduct form should be completed for each student.

54. The completed *Allegation of Academic Misconduct* form and supporting documentation should be submitted to OSACC for the formal allegation to be put to the student.

55. Completed forms should be submitted promptly and should normally be submitted within 4 weeks of the student's submission being received unless there is good reason for the delay. Failure to provide a completed form or the necessary supporting evidence in a timely way may

result in the allegation being dismissed.

56. Following notification to the student of an allegation by OSACC (see paragraph 59 below), the Course Leader (or equivalent) is responsible for ensuring the student is provided with support to enable them to understand the allegation and respond appropriately.

## **PROCESS FOR DEALING WITH SUSPECTED CASES OF ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT (STAGE 2: FORMAL ALLEGATION)**

57. Upon receipt of the Allegation of Academic Misconduct form and supporting documentation from the Course Leader (or equivalent). OSACC will undertake a review to determine whether:

- a. the form is fully completed, with appropriate supporting evidence included;
- b. it has been submitted within the required timeframe.

58. OSACC may request additional evidence and/or clarification upon review of the allegation. Should OSACC request additional evidence to support an allegation, this should be provided in a timely manner and within the deadline issued by OSACC.

59. Where an allegation has met the above requirements, OSACC shall write to the student concerned to:

- a. put the allegation as defined by the Course Leader (or equivalent);
- b. request a written statement in response to the allegation and submission of any evidence they deem appropriate;
- c. signpost support available to the student to enable them to respond, which may include support from their course team, student support services and the Students' Union;
- d. request a reply within ten working days of the date on which the email is sent;
- e. enclose a copy of this policy;
- f. enclose copies of any evidence or reports.

60. Where reasonable adjustments are required, a student may be permitted to attend the Academic Misconduct Panel to present evidence in person (this may be by physical attendance or remote attendance via MS Teams or other appropriate means). The decision as to whether to permit a student to attend will be made by the Chair of the Panel.

61. OSACC will notify the relevant Academic Administrator (or equivalent) when the allegation has been sent to the student. Where possible, every effort should be made to resolve

the matter before the meeting of the Assessment Board. However, where it remains unresolved, the Assessment Board will record a deferred decision (DD) on the electronic student record.

62. If no written reply to the allegation is received from the student within ten working days of the date on which the notification is sent, this is deemed to be acceptance of the allegation.

63. OSACC will review and refer cases as appropriate to the Academic Misconduct Panel or delegated Chair of the Academic Misconduct Panel for consideration.

64. While the allegation remains unresolved, the student shall have the right to continue on the course or commence the next part or stage of the course (where permitted within the relevant assessment regulations) unless the alleged offence is deemed by the Academic Registrar to jeopardise the welfare of the subject (whether patient, pupil or client) and/or contravene any relevant professional code of conduct and/or is incompatible with behaviour required by the profession. In these circumstances, the Academic Registrar shall consult with the relevant Dean of School (or equivalent) to determine whether concurrent action should be taken under the Fitness to Practise Procedure.

### **Consideration of Allegations of Academic Misconduct**

65. The consideration of allegations of academic misconduct need not involve a meeting of members of a Panel if alternative methods of discussion and deliberation are available.

66. For allegations deemed potentially less serious, (for example a student studying at Level 4, with a first offence of plagiarism), a delegated Chair of an Academic Misconduct Panel can consider allegations in conjunction with OSACC and recommend that a penalty be applied if they are found to be proven.

67. Upon review, if OSACC and/or the delegated Chair find that an allegation is sufficiently serious or complex to require further examination by an Academic Misconduct Panel, the case will be referred to a Panel for further consideration.

68. For those allegations that are deemed potentially more serious or is an alleged offence which may be likely to incur a higher penalty (such as contract cheating), or where a student wishes to respond to the allegation in person (or online), a meeting of the Panel will be arranged (see Appendix D for the proceedings of a panel). This will normally take place no later than twenty working days after the date of the notification putting the formal allegation to the student.

69. The Panel or the Delegated Chair has the authority to determine:
- a. that no offence has been committed, or there is insufficient evidence of an offence, in which case the allegation will be removed from the student's record, and the case should be referred back to the course team to be dealt with by them in accordance with paragraph 50;
  - b. that this is a case of poor academic practice, and the case should be referred back to the course team to be dealt with by them in accordance with paragraph 51; or
  - c. that an offence has been committed and recommend the penalty to be imposed, as set out in the Academic Misconduct Penalties table in Appendix A.

70. If the delegated Chair or Panel finds that there is no case to answer, or that it is a case of poor academic practice, OSACC will inform the student accordingly, and all record of the alleged academic misconduct will be removed from the student's record. The Course Leader and Academic Administrator (or equivalent) will be informed of the decision and the work will then be marked on its academic merit in accordance with paragraphs 50 to 51.

71. If the delegated Chair or Panel find that an offence of academic misconduct has been committed, they will agree a penalty to be recommended to the Assessment Board in accordance with paragraphs 74 to 78.

72. The decision of the Panel or the delegated Chair as to whether an offence has been committed is final and will be reported to the student and relevant Assessment Board. The Assessment Board will consider the penalty recommended by the Panel or the delegated Chair and inform the student of the penalty imposed and the impact of that penalty on their studies and/or award.

73. In determining whether an offence has been committed, the judgement will be made on the balance of probability.

74. . In determining the recommended penalty, the Panel or the delegated Chair will take into account:

- a. the severity of the offence;
- b. the intent;
- c. whether it is a first or subsequent offence;
- d. the academic stage of the student;
- e. any mitigation;
- f. the proportionality of the penalty to the offence.

A guide to the standard penalty to be imposed for first offences is provided in Appendix B.

75. The University does not normally accept a student's medical or personal circumstances as an excuse or reason for academic misconduct. However, where the Panel or the delegated Chair deems that the evidenced circumstances have severely impaired the student's capacity for rational judgement, the Panel or the delegated Chair may take account of the circumstances in determining the recommended penalty for the offence.

76. The Panel or delegated Chair shall normally recommend the standard penalties suggested for first offences. However, the Panel or delegated Chair may vary the penalty in such circumstances where the suggested penalty is deemed to be too lenient or too harsh to ensure that the outcome is not disproportionate to the offence. In all cases, the penalty should normally exceed that which would follow if the student had merely been referred in the assessment.

77. The penalty recommended for second or third offences will normally be one penalty point higher than the standard penalty for the offence or one point higher than the penalty previously imposed, whichever is higher. Any student with three sequential offences will automatically receive a minimum of penalty 6 and be required to withdraw.

78. In the context of this policy, sequential offences are offences that do not occur in the same assessment period (for example, semester or block). Where a student has two or more allegations in the same assessment period, these will be considered concurrently (where possible) and the penalty imposed for all pieces of work will be the same.

79. Where a student receives a penalty resulting in the recording of a component mark as 0% refer infringement (RI) or fail infringement (FI) at any attempt, no component of that module can subsequently be considered for in-module compensation (meaning all components marks must be at or above the pass mark defined in the relevant assessment regulations in order for the module to be passed) and the module itself cannot be condoned.

### **Notification to Student and Assessment Board**

80. The decision of the Panel or the delegated Chair of the Academic Misconduct Panel will be communicated to the student and the relevant Assessment Board in writing via OSACC within five working days of the Panel meeting or within five working days of the decision of the delegated Chair.

81. The notification to the student will include the decision and the rationale for the decision.

The Assessment Board will also be notified of the recommended penalty.

### **Action by Assessment Board**

82. Following receipt of the decision, the Assessment Board will meet (where necessary as an extraordinary meeting) to consider the penalty recommended and determine the penalty to be imposed and the consequence of that penalty in the context of the student's overall profile, the relevant assessment regulations and any Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body (PSRB) requirements. The Assessment Board do not have the authority to amend the decision of the panel as to whether or not an offence has been committed, but may apply a lower penalty where the recommended one will have a disproportionate impact. The Chair of the Assessment Board will notify the student, in writing, of the penalty imposed and the appropriate course of action, normally this is within fifteen working days of the date of the letter informing the student of the panel's decision. If the Assessment Board recommends that a lower penalty be applied, a copy of the letter should be sent to OSACC.

83. Where the student concerned is in employment and where the employer has a material interest in the matter (including where the student is on an apprenticeship course), the Assessment Board will inform the employer of the decision and consequence, in writing, within the same timescale.

84. Where PSRBs are involved, the Chair of the Assessment Board will determine in conjunction with the Academic Registrar whether to inform the relevant body of the decision of the panel in writing. Such a report should not be made until the period for lodging an appeal has passed or until any appeal is fully considered.

### **Appeals Procedure**

85. Students may appeal against the verdict of academic misconduct and/or the penalty imposed under the provisions of the Academic Appeals Procedure. This procedure is available on the [University of Suffolk website](#).

### **Plagiarism Detection Software**

86. All work that is submitted electronically will be passed through plagiarism detection software.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

87. Cases of academic misconduct will be reported annually to the Equality and Diversity and Inclusion Committee, Quality Committee and Senate. The reports will include equality

monitoring data.

88. Further monitoring of cases of poor academic practice will be completed on a periodic basis to inform course delivery and institutional student guidance and support approaches.

**APPENDIX A: PENALTIES FOR ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT**

The following table sets out the standard penalties for proven offences.

<b>Minor offence</b>	<b>Penalty 1</b>	The work submitted will be marked in accordance with the assessment / grading criteria but the component mark will be capped at the pass mark. The student will receive a formal written warning.
	<b>Penalty 2</b>	Refer component (mark of 0%, recorded as refer infringement (RI)) with reassessment opportunity where permissible under the relevant assessment regulations. On reassessment, the component mark will be capped at the pass mark. The student will receive a formal written warning.
<b>Serious offence</b>	<b>Penalty 3</b>	Refer component (mark of 0%, recorded as refer infringement (RI)) with reassessment opportunity where permissible under the relevant assessment regulations. On reassessment, the component and module mark will be capped at the pass mark. The student will receive a formal written warning.
	<b>Penalty 4</b>	Fail component (mark of 0%, recorded as fail infringement (FI)) with opportunity to retake module where permissible under the relevant assessment regulations. On retake, the component and module mark will be capped at the pass mark. The student will receive a formal written warning.
<b>Grave offence</b>	<b>Penalty 5</b>	Fail module (mark of 0% for all components, recorded as fail infringement (FI)) with no opportunity for reassessment or retake. The student can take an alternative module where permissible under the relevant assessment regulations, but the module mark will be capped at the pass mark. If the fail results in termination of studies, any work already submitted for outstanding modules will be ratified by the Assessment Board (with no opportunity for reassessment or retake) and the student considered for an exit award only. The student will receive a formal written warning.
	<b>Penalty 6</b>	Fail module (mark of 0% for all components, recorded as fail infringement (FI)) and the student required to withdraw. The Assessment Board will be instructed to ratify the marks for any work already submitted for outstanding modules (with no opportunity for reassessment or retake) and to consider the student for an exit award based on the credit achieved.
<b>Gross misconduct</b>	<b>Penalty 7</b>	Fail module (mark of 0% for all components, recorded as fail infringement (FI)) and the student required to withdraw immediately without being awarded a degree or exit award. Credits which have already been ratified by an Assessment Board will be recorded on a record of achievement only.

All students who receive a penalty between 1 and 5 will be offered support through an appropriate Learning Services package on plagiarism and academic writing. Uptake of the support will be monitored for evaluation.



**APPENDIX B: INDICATIVE OFFENCES AND STANDARD PENALTIES FOR FIRST OFFENCES****Coursework and Time Constrained Assignments (including, but not limited to, written work, presentations, images, designs, artefacts and code)**

	<b>Indicative offence</b>	<b>Standard penalty</b>
<b>Minor offence</b>	Limited use of quotes or close paraphrasing (not more than a few lines) without the use of quotation marks and/or correct referencing, where the student has cited the plagiarised material in the reference list and/or bibliography.	Penalty 2
	Using work previously submitted for another assignment without acknowledgement (self-plagiarism).	Penalty 2
<b>Serious offence</b>	Extensive use of quotes or close paraphrasing without the use of quotation marks and/or correct referencing, where the student has cited the plagiarised material in the reference list and/or bibliography.	Penalty 3
	Submission of work produced in collaboration by two or more students as the work of a single student.	Penalty 3
	Using another person's work or ideas and submitting some of it as if it were the student's own.	Penalty 3
	Submitting a fraudulent claim for extenuating circumstances.	Penalty 3
	Using work generated by artificial intelligence systems and submitting it as if it were the student's own work.	Penalty 4
	Using another person's work or ideas and submitting all of it as if it were the student's own.	Penalty 4
	The presentation of data based on work purporting to have been carried out by the student but which has been fabricated (i.e. invented, altered or falsified).	Penalty 4
	Failure to have ethical approval where required and embarking on research activities which require ethical approval without that approval being formally granted.	Penalty 4
	Extensive use of quotes or close paraphrasing without the use of quotation marks and/or correct referencing, where the student has not cited the plagiarised material in the reference list and/or bibliography.	Penalty 4
<b>Grave offence</b>	Commissioning another person to complete an item of assessment that is submitted as the student's own work. This includes, but is not limited to, the use of professional essay writing services and essay banks as well as friends and family members.	Penalty 5
	Using work generated by artificial intelligence systems and submitting all of it as if it were the student's own work.	Penalty 5
	Disguising work in a deliberate attempt to conceal its origins.	Penalty 5

	Offering a bribe or inducement to persons connected with the assessment in order to gain an unfair advantage.	Penalty 5
	Attempting to persuade another student or a member of staff to participate in any other actions in order to gain an unfair advantage.	Penalty 5

**Examinations and Time Constrained Assignments (including, but not limited to, written, online, viva and practical)**

	<b>Indicative offence</b>	<b>Standard penalty</b>
<b>Minor offence</b>	Removing any script, question paper, or other official stationery (whether completed or not) from the examination room, unless specifically authorised by an invigilator or examiner.	Penalty 1
	Possession of devices (such as mobile phones, smart watches or personal multimedia devices) of any kind other than those specifically permitted.	Penalty 2
<b>Serious offence</b>	Communicating with another student or with any third party other than the invigilator or examiner during an examination.	Penalty 3
	Copying or attempting to copy the work of another student, whether by overlooking, asking for information, or by any other means.	Penalty 3
	Behaviour in a manner likely to prejudice the chances of another student.	Penalty 3
	Submitting a fraudulent claim for extenuating circumstances.	Penalty 3
	Using work generated by artificial intelligence systems and submitting it as if it were the student's own work.	Penalty 4
	Possession or use of crib sheets, revision notes or unauthorised texts; unauthorised access of the internet; or use of devices (such as mobile phones, smart watches or personal multimedia devices) of any kind other than those specifically permitted.	Penalty 4
<b>Grave offence</b>	Using work generated by artificial intelligence systems and submitting all of it as if it were the student's own.	Penalty 5
	Being party to any arrangement whereby a person other than the student represents, or intends to represent, the student in an examination.	Penalty 5
	Taking into an examination a pre-written examination script for submission.	Penalty 5
	Obtaining, or seeking to obtain, access to an unseen examination paper prior to the start of an examination.	Penalty 5
	Offering a bribe or inducement to invigilators, examiners or other persons connected with the examination in order to gain an unfair advantage.	Penalty 5
	Attempting to persuade another student or a member of staff to participate in any other actions in order to gain an unfair advantage.	Penalty 5

**Note**

The tables above are provided as a guide to the recommended standard penalty to be imposed for first offences of academic misconduct with examples given as an indication of the type of offence. The penalty for a second or subsequent proven offence will normally be one penalty point higher than the standard penalty shown or one point higher than the previously imposed penalty, whichever is higher.

The examples given above do not represent an exhaustive list of potential offences and should not be interpreted as such.

## APPENDIX C: GUIDANCE ON TYPES OF EVIDENCE TO EVALUATE AND PRESENT IN SUSPECTED INFRINGEMENTS OF POLICY

### Evidence to evaluate in cases of suspected plagiarism

- Data from Turnitin (or equivalent plagiarism detection software) indicating matches in sections of text – cross referenced against student’s referencing for absences of acknowledgment. **Note: a high similarity ‘score’ is not acceptable as a stand-alone justification for allegations of plagiarism;**
- Unacknowledged text/idea/image that in the marker’s judgement is not ‘in the public domain’ but comes from an identifiable source/set of sources;
- Absence of clear acknowledgement of source of text/idea/image in citations or narratives;
- Heterogeneity of font/pica/style of sections of text; variations in spellings (UK/US);
- Absence of elements of bibliographical details;
- Students’ use of language about their ownership of text/idea/image;
- Students’ responses to viva/informal questions.

### Evidence to evaluate in cases of suspected collusion

- Data from Turnitin (or equivalent plagiarism detection software) indicating matches in texts between two students in same cohort;
- Marker’s comments and evaluation of students’ assessments;
- Level of cooperation/group work that exceeds set parameters;
- Set requirements of assessment brief on acceptable limits of group work activity;
- Students’ responses to viva/informal questions.

### Evidence to evaluate in cases of suspected contract cheating

- Module leaders’ and markers’ familiarity with students’ work – unexplained grade shifts;
- Failure of essay to align to assignments as set, and to content of lecture(s);
- Errors/inconsistencies in use of English (UK/US), changes in style, voice or syntax, heterogeneity in fonts/styles;
- Outcome of investigative interview / viva with student;
- Third party evidence (other students);
- IT forensics;
- E mail and other engagement with essay mill or essay bank services;
- Data from Services designed to detect the use of artificial intelligence in the production of work;
- Full guidance available from <https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/quality-code/contracting-to-cheat-in-higher-education.pdf>.

## **APPENDIX D: MEETING OF THE ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT PANEL**

1. If it is agreed that the student will be permitted to attend the Academic Misconduct Panel, OSACC will write to the student and the student will normally be given at least five working days' notice of the panel meeting.
2. OSACC will inform the student, via email, of the date, time and venue (if applicable) of the meeting. The meeting will normally take place virtually via MS Teams.
3. The student may be accompanied at the meeting by a friend. A friend is defined as a member of staff of the University of Suffolk or one of its partner institutions, or a registered student of the University, or a member of staff or sabbatical officer of the Students' Union. The role of the friend is to act as an observer, give moral support and to assist the student to make their case. In addition, where reasonable adjustments are required, a student may be accompanied by a supporter eg. a sign language communicator or a notetaker, and a student with difficulty in understanding English may be accompanied by an interpreter.
4. The Academic Misconduct Panel shall comprise:
  - a. Deputy Vice-Chancellor or nominee (Chair); and
  - b. at least two members of academic staff (to be drawn from a pool of academics who have been trained for the role)
5. Membership of the Panel may be varied to ensure that the academic staff members are not considering any allegations concerning their own module but have the necessary understanding of the discipline to inform discussions. The Director of Learning and Teaching, the Director of the Centre for Academic and International Partnerships, the Pro-Vice Chancellor Research and the Deputy Academic Registrar may deputise for the Deputy Vice-Chancellor as Chair when required. A representative from OSACC will be in attendance to guide procedurally and to ensure consistency in decision making and record the Panel's decision and justification for that decision.
6. If the student does not appear at the meeting, the Panel may proceed with the consideration of the allegation in the student's absence provided the Panel is satisfied that the student has received proper and timely notification of the meeting.
7. The Chair of the Panel shall explain that the purpose of the meeting is to establish whether an offence of academic misconduct has been committed. They will put the allegation to

the student and make available for scrutiny any relevant documentary evidence, including any statements by staff or students, sources of allegedly plagiarised passages and/or passages where collusion is suspected, annotated coursework or scripts, and falsified documents.

8. The student will make a statement in response to the allegation, following which the members of the Panel have the right to put any questions to the student.

9. At any time during the meeting, the Chair of the Panel may decide to suspend proceedings in order to seek more evidence. The student will be advised of the action that will be taken and the date of the reconvened meeting.

10. If the student admits the offence at the meeting, the Chair of the Panel shall invite the student to sign a written statement to this effect.

11. At the end of the questioning, the student will be asked to leave the meeting for the Panel to deliberate and reach its decision in private.

12. The Panel shall determine its decision based on the written and oral evidence. If the Panel finds that there is no case to answer, or that it is a case of poor academic practice, the Chair will inform the student accordingly, in writing via OSACC, and all record of the alleged academic misconduct will be removed from the student's record. The Course Leader (or equivalent), Academic Administrator (or equivalent) and the Chair of the Assessment Board will be informed of the decision and the work will then be marked on its academic merit.