INTRODUCTION, PURPOSE & SCOPE

Academic misconduct is where a student gains or seeks to gain, advantage in an assessment by unfair or improper means.

1.1 Purpose
The University has a public duty to ensure that the highest standards are maintained in the conduct of assessment. This is essential to safeguard the legitimate interests of its students and the University's academic standards and reputation. Academic misconduct is taken very seriously. The University will take action against any student who contravenes these regulations through negligence, carelessness, ignorance or by deliberate intent. The University considers that an act of academic misconduct is committed irrespective of whether the student intended to commit the act, e.g. plagiarism may be committed regardless of whether the student intended to deceive the assessors.

1.2 Scope
These regulations apply to all taught undergraduate, postgraduate and further education students of the University.

2. TYPES OF ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

2.1 Academic misconduct can take a variety of forms and includes, but is not limited to, the following:

2.2 Plagiarism (including self-plagiarism)

2.2.1 This is where a student either:

i) presents work for assessment which contains the unacknowledged published or unpublished words, thoughts, judgements, ideas, structures or images of another person or persons. This includes material downloaded from digital sources, and material obtained from a third party; or

ii) presents work for assessment which that student has previously submitted for assessment as part of the same or another unit or course, or at another institution. This is known as self-plagiarism and relates to the principle that a student may not receive credit for the
same piece of work more than once unless specifically required to resubmit work (e.g. as part of a Resit task.)

2.2.2 It is not an offence for a student to draw upon the work or ideas of another person where this is appropriately acknowledged. Plagiarism can be avoided by the accurate use of quotation marks, detailed references and a full bibliography. Further information, including guidance on how to avoid plagiarism, can be found on the Academic Integrity section of the UCA website. Students who have any doubts about what constitutes correct referencing can also look up the Harvard Referencing Guide on the UCA website at the following link: https://www.uca.ac.uk/library/academic-support/harvard-referencing/ Alternatively, students can contact Library and Student Services via the Student Gateway located in the libraries or their Course/Unit Leader for guidance.

2.3 Collusion

2.3.1 This is where a student either:

i) presents work for assessment done in collaboration with another person as entirely their own; or

ii) collaborates with another student on work which is subsequently submitted as entirely that other student’s work.

2.3.2 Where students in a class are instructed or encouraged to work together on an assignment or other assessed task, this is regarded as approved collaboration and not collusion, although there may be a requirement for each student to identify their own contribution.

2.4 Examination Offences

2.4.1 Examples of examination offences include, but are not limited to:

i) taking unauthorised material into the examination room;

ii) communicating or attempting to communicate in any way with another student during the examination;

iii) failure to comply with an invigilator’s instructions;

iv) any other breach of examination regulations (see Examination Regulations) in which the student is seeking to gain an unfair advantage.

2.5 Other Dishonest Practice

2.5.1 Examples of other dishonest practice include, but are not limited to:

i) offering a bribe or inducement to any staff (academic or administrative) involved in the assessment process;

ii) seeking to obtain access to confidential information e.g. examination questions, prior to the examination;

iii) making false declarations in order to receive special consideration by a Board of Examiners;

iv) falsifying transcripts, certificates or other official University documentation relating to assessment outcomes.

3. STAGE 1 – REPORTING & INITIAL INVESTIGATION

3.1 Plagiarism or Collusion
3.1.1 Where any member of the University suspects or believes that a student has committed an act of plagiarism or collusion they should notify the Programme Director and Campus Registry as soon as possible. No mark shall be assigned to the piece of work in question and consideration of the student’s results will be put on hold until the matter is resolved.

3.1.2 On receipt of an allegation, the Programme Director will review the piece of work in question and make one of the following determinations, normally within 15 working days of receipt of the allegation:

i. that there is no case to answer, in which case the work will be returned for marking;

ii. that the work reflects poor scholarship (e.g. inappropriate or excessive use of sources and/or inappropriate referencing) but falls short of misconduct, in which case the work will be returned for marking on its merits;

iii. that the piece of work contains plagiarism or is the result of collusion. In this case the Programme Director will determine a point score and a provisional penalty in accordance with the Standard Penalty Tariff (see Appendix 1), and the student will be invited to admit or deny the allegation and to accept or reject the penalty (see paragraph 3.1.3 below). Where the tariff point score is 480 or greater, the Programme Director should consult with the Head of School before proceeding.

3.1.3 Where a student is invited to admit or deny an allegation of academic misconduct and to accept or reject the penalty in accordance with 3.1.2.iii above, the following procedure applies:

i. The Programme Director will write to the student:
   • to present the allegation;
   • to confirm that it is the Programme Director’s judgement that the work contains plagiarism or is the result of collusion;
   • to confirm the point score for each category as specified in the Standard Penalty Tariff, the reasons for allocating those point scores, and the total point score;
   • to inform the student of the penalty to be applied;
   • to invite the student to either admit the allegation and accept the penalty, admit the allegation but not accept the penalty, or deny the allegation;
   • to inform the student that:
     o if they either admit the allegation and accept the penalty or fail to respond within the stated timeframe, the penalty will be applied without further right of appeal; and
     o if they either admit the allegation but do not accept the penalty or deny the allegation outright, the matter will proceed to stage 2 and referred to the Head of School to consider (see paragraph 4. below)

ii. The student should be given 10 working days within which to respond;

iii. A copy of the letter should be sent to the Quality Manager, who will log the case for monitoring purposes;

iv. Where the student either fails to respond within 10 working days or responds and admits the allegation and accepts the penalty, the penalty will be applied. This outcome will be notified to the Quality Manager, who will log the outcome for monitoring purposes. In this instance, there will be no right of appeal and the University’s internal procedures are completed;

v. Where the student either admits the allegation but does not accept the penalty, or denies the allegation outright, the matter will proceed to stage 2 and referred to the Head of School to consider (see paragraph 4. below).
3.2 All Other Academic Misconduct

3.2.1 Where any member of the University suspects or believes that a student has committed an act of academic misconduct other than collusion or plagiarism, they should notify the Campus Registry and the Quality Manager as soon as possible. No mark will be assigned to any piece of work in question, and consideration of the student’s results will be put on hold until the matter is resolved.

3.2.3 On receipt of such an allegation, the Quality Manager will inform the student in writing (normally by email to their UCA email account) of the allegation and will undertake a preliminary investigation, which may involve interviewing the student concerned as well as any witnesses. Following the preliminary investigation, the Quality Manager will make one of the following determinations, normally within 15 working days of receipt of the allegation:

i. that there is no apparent case of academic misconduct, in which case the student will be advised in writing and no further action will be taken;

ii. that there is an apparent case of academic misconduct, in which case the student will be advised in writing and the matter referred to the Academic Misconduct Panel to consider (see paragraph 5. below).

There is no right of appeal against the Quality Manager’s determination.

4. STAGE 2 – CONSIDERATION BY THE HEAD OF SCHOOL

4.1 Where the matter is referred to the Head of School in accordance with paragraph 3.1.3.v above, the following procedure applies:

i. in cases where the student has admitted the offence, they should provide a written rationale stating why they believe the penalty they received is not justified and should be lowered (where no written rationale is provided, the Head of School will consider the case based on the available evidence); or

ii. in cases where the student denies the allegation of academic misconduct, the Head of School will make a determination based on the evidence presented, including any written rationale and/or evidence presented by the student, as to whether the allegation against the student is justified.

4.2 The Head of School will make one of the following determinations:

i. that the proposed penalty is appropriate in light of the offence and will be applied;

ii. that the proposed penalty is overly severe and a lower penalty will be applied;

iii. that the case against the student is justified and the proposed penalty will be applied;

iv. that the case against the student is justified, but that the proposed penalty is overly severe and a lower penalty will be applied;

v. that there is no case to answer, in which case the work will be returned for marking.

4.3 The Head of School will write to the student, normally within 10 working days of receipt of the allegation, outlining their determination and reasons for it.

5. STAGE 3 – CONSIDERATION BY THE ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT PANEL (AMP)

5.1 Where the student is dissatisfied with the Head of School’s determination, they have the right to request that the matter be referred to the Academic Misconduct Panel (AMP) for review.
5.2 Students should submit their request to the Campus Registry, who will forward it to the Quality Manager to convene the AMP, normally within 1 month of receipt of the request. Where it is not possible for the Panel to convene within this timeframe, the student will be informed and advised of the reasons for the delay.

5.3 Students have the right to present their case to the AMP in person should they wish, however this is not compulsory and students are able to submit a written statement as well as witness statements (if applicable) in support of their case for the panel to consider. Where a student chooses not to appear before the panel, the Quality Manager will normally convene the members of the AMP via email to discuss and consider the case based on available written material, including any statements submitted by the student.

5.4 The membership of the AMP is as follows:

   i. A Head of School from a School other than that of the student (Chair);

   ii. An academic staff member who is not known to the student and has had no prior involvement in the case;

   iii. A student member, nominated by the Students’ Union, who is not known to the student and who has had no prior involvement in the case. *

   iv. The Director of Quality Assurance & Enhancement (or nominee).

The quorum of the AMP shall be three, including the Chair.

*For the purpose of this regulation, ‘student’ is deemed to include a sabbatical officer of the Students’ Union.

5.5 Where a student chooses to appear before the AMP, they may be represented by a member of the University (employee, student or Students’ Union officer). The student may also be accompanied by a friend or family member. Only the designated representative is permitted to speak on the student’s behalf. If the student is to be represented and/or accompanied, the name(s) of the person(s) must be notified to the Quality Manager at least 5 working days in advance of the AMP meeting.

5.6 Documentary material for consideration by the Panel, and/or the names of any witnesses and written copies of their evidence, must be received by the Quality Manager at least 5 working days in advance of the AMP meeting.

5.7 Written notice of the meeting date and venue will be sent to the student at least 10 working days in advance, along with notification of the student’s right to be represented and accompanied, and right to call witnesses and provide documentary evidence.

5.8 Any other persons may also be invited or requested to attend the meeting where, following discussion between the Quality Manager and Chair of the AMP, it is believed that their attendance will help to inform the AMP’s consideration of the case. In the case of an allegation of plagiarism or collusion, this will normally include the person who first identified the suspect work and/or the Programme Director who made the determination of plagiarism or collusion. In the case of an allegation of other forms of academic misconduct, this will normally include the person who first identified the alleged misconduct.

5.9 The student will have the right to be present throughout the meeting in order to hear all of the evidence presented, however, the absence of the student will not prevent the meeting from taking place, nor invalidate the proceedings.

5.10 The student must be given the opportunity to respond to all evidence submitted, to put questions to all witnesses present, and to make a closing statement.

5.11 The AMP will consider its findings in private. The AMP will determine, on the balance of probabilities,
whether or not an offence has been committed and, if it has, the sanction to be imposed.

5.12 Where the AMP determines that an offence has been committed, in cases of plagiarism or collusion the AMP will apply one of the penalties listed at Appendix 1.

5.13 In cases other than those of plagiarism or collusion, the AMP will either apply one of the penalties listed at Appendix 1, or apply one of the following sanctions:

i. a formal warning, in which case a record will be logged on the student’s file, any work in question will be marked according to its merits, but the offence will be taken into account when determining the penalty for any subsequent offence;

ii. revocation of an award, with all credits withdrawn.

5.14 When determining the sanction, the AMP will take into account the following factors:

i. **Severity of Offence**
   The sanction applied will reflect the severity of the offence, taking into account the obligations on the University to uphold its academic standards and reputation.

ii. **Previous Offences**
   Where a student has previously admitted to or been found to have committed an offence of academic misconduct, the sanction applied will normally be more severe than had it been the student’s first offence.

iv. **Impact on Other Students**
   Where the offence has had, could have had, or was intended to have an adverse effect on the standing or wellbeing of another student or students, the sanction applied may be more severe than had this not been the case. The AMP may additionally refer a student for disciplinary action in accordance with the *Student Code of Conduct & Disciplinary Procedure*.

5.15 Where the AMP determines that no offence has been committed, all relevant parties will be notified and any work in question will be marked without prejudice.

5.16 The Chair of the AMP will notify the student in writing of the AMP’s decision, normally within 5 working days of the AMP meeting, giving full reasons for the decision. Where it is not possible for the Chair to meet this deadline, the student will be informed and will be advised of the reasons for the delay. The student’s Programme Director and the Campus Registry will also be notified of the AMP’s decision.

5.17 The decision of the AMP is final. There will be no further opportunities for appeal, and the University’s internal procedures are completed.

6. **OFFICE OF THE INDEPENDENT ADJUDICATOR**

6.1 Where a student, other than a Further Education student, is dissatisfied with the outcome of the University’s academic misconduct procedure, they may refer the outcome of the case, as a complaint, to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA).

6.2 The OIA provides an independent scheme for the review of unresolved student complaints. The complaint must be submitted to the OIA within 12 months from the date of issue of the Completion of Procedures letter.

6.3 Further details about the OIA can be obtained from the Quality Manager, or from the following website: [http://www.oiahe.org.uk/](http://www.oiahe.org.uk/) or by contacting the OIA at the following address:

   Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education  
   Second Floor  
   Abbey Gate
7. MONITORING

7.1 The outcome of Academic Misconduct cases and the operation of the policy and procedure are formally monitored and an annual report presented to the Academic Quality Committee.
APPENDIX 1: STANDARD PENALTY TARIFFS FOR PLAGIARISM & COLLUSION

How It Works

Step 1 – the piece of work is allocated a point score for each category below.

HISTORY*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st offence</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd offence</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd and subsequent offence</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* the Campus Registry can confirm whether the student has previous offences

EXTENT (A score relating to the extent of the plagiarised work applies equally to written work and to artefacts, images and other multimedia work. In cases of non-written work, Programme Directors/ Heads of School / Academic Misconduct Panels will need to exercise their academic judgement to come to a view on the proportion of the work that is plagiarised.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extent</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Below 5%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between 5% and 10%</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between 11% and 20%</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between 21% and 30%</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between 31% and 40%</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between 41% and 50%</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above 50%</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submission purchased or commissioned from essay mill, ghost writing service or other third party</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Step 2 – the above point scores are added together to give a total score for the piece of work:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>History</th>
<th>Extent</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Step 3 - the total score is then mapped to a penalty in accordance with the table below.

*Note that where an offence is committed at resit, a further assessment attempt will be added to the student’s record for point scores of 200 and above.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Available Penalties (select one)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td>A formal warning, which will be logged on the student’s file and the offence will be taken into account when determining the sanction for any subsequent offence. The plagiarised elements of the work will be disregarded and the work marked on the basis of what remains. <em>(This sanction will be applied by default for all following penalty bands.)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>150 – 175</td>
<td>Assessment component awarded 0 - reassessment permitted with no penalty on mark.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200 – 225</td>
<td>Assessment component awarded 0 - reassessment permitted, but component mark capped at 40.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>250 – 350</td>
<td>All units in that stage awarded 0 – reassessment of units permitted with no penalty on marks. *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>400 – 450</td>
<td>Unit awarded 0 – reassessment not permitted. Credits already achieved retained and exit award issued where applicable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>500 +</td>
<td>Enrolment terminated and all credits already achieved rescinded.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*For PG courses reassessment of a unit will take place at the next available opportunity, i.e. when the unit is next run (normally in the next academic year) and according pro-rata fees charged.*

*Where the reassessment of a unit is not permitted, this will result, in accordance with paragraph 4.5.3 of the Common Credit Framework, in the student having their enrolment terminated. This should be taken into account before selecting this option.*

*Note that, in accordance with paragraph 5.3 of the Common Credit Framework, a unit that has been subject to academic misconduct is not eligible for stage-compensation.*

*Note that in cases where an award has already been conferred before the offence came to light, many of these penalties will result in the revocation of that award.*