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Academic Regulations

Academic Integrity

Section 10

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Academic Integrity

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Contents

10.1	Purpose	1
10.2	General Principles of Academic Integrity.....	1
10.3	Code of Practice for Academic Integrity	2
10.3.1	Definitions.....	2
10.3.2	General Provisions.....	4
10.3.3	Suspected Cases	5

Section 10: Academic Integrity

10.1 Purpose

Academic integrity is a fundamental principle within the University and is strongly linked to good academic practice. This section of the Academic Regulations defines the University's approach to maintaining the academic integrity of students' work and safeguarding against breaches of academic integrity. The University has processes to investigate alleged breaches of academic integrity and, where a breach of academic integrity is admitted or found, applies appropriate penalties as defined in this code.

The University seeks to educate its students about academic integrity prior to assessment to both reduce breaches of academic integrity and to highlight the severity with which certain offences will be dealt. Academic judgement regarding the nature and severity of the case will be applied prior to investigation of a suspected breach of academic integrity.

10.2 General Principles of Academic Integrity

The University will promote academic integrity and will focus on educating students about good academic practice from the start of their course. Students will be required to develop good academic practice throughout the duration of their study at Leeds Beckett University.

The University will ensure that students are treated fairly when being assessed and that any student suspected of a breach of academic integrity will be investigated and will have a fair hearing. However, where a mark has been confirmed by either a Module Board or a joint Module/ Award Board, it is beyond the scope of these regulations.

Opportunities for further education about academic integrity and good academic practice will be provided to students who have admitted to breaching, or been found to have breached, these regulations

Penalties applied to students are appropriate to:

- a) The gravity of the case
- b) The circumstances of the case
- c) The level at which the offence took place
- d) Whether the offence was a repeat offence

There are four categories of investigation which relate to the nature and severity of the suspected offence.

Clear definitions of offences covered by these regulations will be provided to students. Students will be informed of the consequences of breaching the regulations in respect of academic integrity. Professional Body accreditation may have an impact upon the nature of the penalty or the consequences of breaching academic integrity. All students so affected will be made aware of this.

All forms of assessment are subject to these regulations (see Section 3). A suspected breach of academic integrity in relation to a taught award will be investigated through local processes. A suspected breach of academic integrity in relation to a research award will be investigated by the Research Degrees Sub-committee.

A suspected breach of academic integrity, whether intentional or unintentional, is a matter of academic judgement and may be considered a breach of these regulations.

Any student suspected of a breach of academic integrity will be provided with information about the alleged offence which explains why they are being investigated.

Any student with a suspected breach of academic integrity will have the right to submit extenuating circumstances in explanation of their actions. Where extenuating circumstances are accepted they will be taken into consideration in determining the penalty. Full details can be found in the guidance that accompanies these regulations.

Once an investigation into a possible offence commences, the student may not invoke the Student Complaints Procedure on any matter directly related to the proceedings.

In the event of a finding that no offence has occurred, the documentation associated with the allegation will be shredded/deleted immediately.

Where an offence has been admitted or found, all documentation associated with the case will be retained in accordance with the retention policy.

10.3 Code of Practice for Academic Integrity

10.3.1 Definitions

Poor Academic Practice

Poor academic practice occurs when the standard of referencing is not at the level required by the nature of the assessment.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the substantial, unacknowledged, incorporation in a student's work of material derived from the work (published or unpublished) of another. "Work" includes, but is not limited to, materials in all formats and sources including print, electronic, online, audio visual etc.

Examples of plagiarism include:

- a) the inclusion in a student's work of substantial extracts from another person's work without the use of quotation marks
- b) the substantial summarising of another person's work without acknowledgement
- c) the substantial and unauthorised use of the ideas of another person without acknowledgement

Self-Plagiarism

Self-plagiarism occurs when a student submits their own work which has already received credit. This may be part of a piece of work or the entire piece of work.

Self-plagiarism does not apply in circumstances where students are required to complete reassessment or repeat a module(s).

Collusion

Collusion occurs when a student collaborates with another student in the completion of work which is then submitted as unaided work by either student.

Cheating

Cheating is unfair behaviour relating to an examination. It includes, but is not limited to

- a) Actions within the examination room:
 - communicating with any other candidate during an examination
 - copying from any other candidate during an examination
 - communicating with any other person other than an authorised invigilator or another member of staff during an examination
 - possession of any written or printed materials in the examination room unless expressly permitted by the examination regulations possession of any

electronically stored information in the examination room unless expressly permitted by the examination regulations

- possession of a mobile phone or other electronic device during an examination, unless expressly permitted by the examination regulations

b) Actions outside of the examination room:

- gaining access to any unauthorised material relating to the examination during or before the examination
- obtaining a copy of a written examination paper in advance of the time and date for its authorised release.

Contract Cheating

Contract cheating occurs when a student instructs a third party to do some or all of a piece of work (paid or unpaid).

Other Forms of Unfair Practice

Other forms of Unfair Practice include, but are not limited to:

- a) offering a bribe or inducement to any member of staff of the University, or any external invigilator or examiner, who is connected with the student's assessments
- b) falsifying data in any piece of work
- c) the assumption by one person of the identity of another person with the intent to deceive or gain unfair advantage
- d) submitting copies of another person's work stored on an electronic device
- e) non-compliance with university research ethics procedures
- f) failure to gain ethical approval for the submitted piece of work, as appropriate.
- g) Other forms of intent to gain unfair advantage.

10.3.2 General Provisions

Standard of Proof

The standard of proof required at any stage of investigation is that of "the balance of probabilities".

Timescales for Investigations

The University intends to deal speedily with any suspected breach of academic integrity and has developed a service standard for investigating suspected breaches. The full service standard can be found in the guidance which accompanies these regulations. The University undertakes to endeavour to meet the timescales of the service standard, but accepts no liability for failure to do so.

In exceptional cases, or where it becomes apparent that investigation of an alleged breach of academic integrity is likely to be complex and protracted; or where relevant evidence cannot be speedily obtained and presented; variation of the expected timescales should be agreed between the student and the University.

Academic Integrity Lead

In order to provide a consistent approach to the promotion of good academic practice and investigation of cases, each Dean of School or equivalent will appoint one or more Academic Integrity Leads at school or subject level as deemed appropriate.

The role of the Academic Integrity Lead is to:

- a) provide advice and guidance to members of staff on academic integrity related issues
- b) determine the level at which cases should be managed
- c) manage the Category 2 process
- d) assist with the delivery of staff development on academic integrity related issues

Consideration of Individual Cases

Each case will be considered on its own merits, and on the basis of:

- a) The gravity of the case
- b) The circumstances of the case
- c) The level at which the offence took place
- d) Whether the offence was a repeat offence

10.3.3 Suspected Cases

Making an Allegation

A suspected breach of academic integrity may be identified by a member of staff of our university or of a collaborative partner.

Taught awards may be investigated following submission of assessment or examination.

Research awards may be investigated prior to or following submission for examination.

Determination of Process

Categorisation of the suspected breach of academic integrity and determination of how it should be investigated is made by the appropriate Academic Integrity Lead and the member of staff identifying the suspected case.

The possible processes for investigation are:

Category 1 – Poor Academic Practice

Examples of poor academic practice include, but are not limited to:

- a) Inadequate referencing
- b) Plagiarism
- c) Self-plagiarism

Category 2 – Academic Misdemeanour

Examples of academic misdemeanour include, but are not limited to:

- a) Plagiarism
- b) Self-plagiarism
- c) Repeat instances of poor academic practice
- d) Cheating

Category 3 – Academic Misconduct

Examples of academic misconduct include, but are not limited to:

- a) Repeat instances of academic misdemeanour
- b) Cheating

Category 4 – Gross Academic Misconduct

Examples of academic misconduct include, but are not limited to:

- a) Contract cheating
- b) Falsification of data
- c) Cheating

Category 1

Outcomes will be determined through standard marking processes.

Category 2

Category 2 will be conducted by the Academic Integrity Lead.

A student will be given the following information in writing, at least 5 working days in advance of a request to attend a Category 2 meeting:

- a) The reason for their attendance being required
- b) A copy of any relevant report or other evidence
- c) The right to seek advice from the Students' Union
- d) The right to accompaniment/representation

A student will have the right to:

- i. be accompanied by a friend (provided that the friend is not a professionally contracted advocate);
- ii. be accompanied or represented by a Students' Union representative. (This right of accompaniment and representation is a general right and is not the right to accompaniment and/or representation by a specific individual.)

It is the student(s) responsibility to:

- a) Co-operate with the regulations concerning the alleged offence
- b) Attend the investigatory meeting/submit a written response to the allegation
- c) Demonstrate that the work is their own or that the alleged offence has not occurred.

Guidance about the format of the meetings and membership requirements for all processes are provided by Quality Assurance Services.

The outcome of an admitted or found case can be found in the Schedule of Outcomes.

Categories 3 and 4

An Academic Misconduct Board will be established to investigate suspected cases at categories 3 and 4. This will normally be convened at School level.

Right to Accompaniment or Representation

A student will be given the following information in writing, at least 10 working days in advance of a meeting of the Board:

- a) The reason for their attendance being required
- b) A copy of any relevant report or other evidence
- c) The right to seek advice from the Students' Union
- d) The right to accompaniment/representation

A student will have the right to:

- a) be accompanied by a friend (provided that the friend is not a professionally contracted advocate);
- b) be accompanied or represented by a Students' Union representative. (This right of accompaniment and representation is a general right and is not the right to accompaniment and/or representation by a specific individual.)

Responsibilities of Student(s)

It is the student(s) responsibility to:

- a) Attend the meeting and/or submit a written response to the allegation
- b) Seek advice from the Students' Union if required

Membership of School Academic Misconduct Board

The School Academic Misconduct Board consists of:

- Chair (Dean of School or nominee)
- Two Academic Integrity Leads (from different Schools to that of the student under consideration)

The following participants will be also be in attendance:

- Internal Examiner (the person identifying the alleged offence)
- Student
- Student's friend or representative (if applicable)
- Secretary (a member of support staff from within the School)

Quality Assurance Services will:

- provide staff development and support for colleagues involved at any stage of the Academic Integrity procedures;
- perform an audit function to ensure the equitable application of the Academic Integrity Regulations and procedures.

Guidance about the format of the meetings and membership requirements for all processes is provided by Quality Assurance Services.

The outcome of an admitted or found cases can be found in the Schedule of Outcomes for taught awards.

Viva Voce

A viva voce examination should be held where a student has a suspected case of contract cheating. The viva should not determine whether the allegation is substantiated, but should gather evidence to be considered by the Academic Misconduct Board, by allowing the student to defend their work.

Where a suspected case of contract cheating is identified, a viva voce examination should be arranged at the earliest opportunity.

Viva Participants

The viva participants are:

- Chair: an appropriately experienced and trained senior academic member of staff (who may be an Academic Integrity Lead) from outside of the School to that of the student under consideration
- Student
- Student's friend or representative (if applicable), but not a legal representative
- Academic subject expert (normally the person identifying the alleged offence)
- Secretary (a member of support staff from within the School)

- Process advisor (Quality Assurance Services)

Right to Accompaniment or Representation

A student will be given the following information in writing, at least 10 working days in advance of a viva voce examination:

- a) The reason for their attendance being required
- b) A copy of any relevant report or other evidence
- c) The right to seek advice from the Students' Union
- d) The right to accompaniment/representation

A student will have the right to:

- a) be accompanied by a friend (provided that the friend is not a professionally contracted advocate);
- b) be accompanied or represented by a Students' Union representative. This right of accompaniment and representation is a general right and is not the right to accompaniment and/or representation by a specific individual.

Responsibilities of Student(s)

It is the student(s) responsibility to:

- a) Attend the viva voce examination
- b) Seek advice from the Students' Union if required

Conduct of the Viva

The Chair must ensure that the viva is conducted in a collegiate manner and that the student is treated fairly.

The student should be allowed to present evidence, such as date-stamped draft copies of their work, to support their claim that they did complete the work themselves.

The subject expert will normally ask questions about the work to ascertain whether the student understands what they submitted and have met the relevant learning outcomes.

A record of the viva is added to the set of evidence that constitutes the case against the student.

Further guidance about the format of the Viva Voce Examination is provided by Quality Assurance Services.

Schedule of Outcomes for Taught Awards

The category of the breach and the gravity and circumstances of the case will inform the penalty in accordance with the schedule of outcomes for taught awards. Where extenuating circumstances have been accepted they will be taken into consideration in determining the penalty. Full details can be found in the guidance that accompanies these regulations.

The following outcomes will be available following an admitted or found case:

Investigation Stage	Available Penalties
Category 1 – Poor Academic Practice (Marker)	<p>Work will be marked through standard marking processes.</p> <p>Feedback will include opportunities for further education about academic integrity and good academic practice.</p>
Category 2 – Academic Misdemeanour (Academic Integrity Lead)	<p>A mark of zero will be attributed to the assessment and the case will be referred to the Module Board. Any eligibility for reassessment (for a capped mark of 40%) will be confirmed by the relevant Module Board/Progression and Award board and be available at the next scheduled reassessment period.</p> <p>A letter of warning will be sent to the student and they will be strongly recommended to engage with the opportunities for further education about academic integrity and good academic practice.</p>
Category 3 – Academic Misconduct (Academic Misconduct Board)	<p>Module failed with no right of reassessment.</p> <p>A letter of final warning will be sent to the student and they will be strongly recommended to engage with the opportunities for further education about academic integrity and good academic practice.</p>
Category 4 – Gross Academic Misconduct (Academic Misconduct Board)	<p>Level failed and requirement to withdraw from the course/pathway of study. The Progression and Award Board will advise the student of their entitlement to a contained award or credit achieved, if applicable.</p> <p>A letter of withdrawal will be sent to the student.</p>

Non-Attendance of Student at any stage of these procedures

In the event of non-attendance (in person, by telephone or internet) without good cause, of a student at any stage of these proceedings, the Academic Integrity Lead or Academic Misconduct Board is authorised to proceed in their absence.

Right to Request an Appeal Hearing

All students have a right to request an appeal hearing in respect of the decision of a Module Board, Progression and Award Board or Research Degrees Sub-committee in accordance with Section 9 of the Academic Regulations.

Fail Withdraw

All students have the right to request an early appeal hearing to reconsider a decision of Fail Withdraw at the time of formal publication of decisions by the Academic Misconduct Board or Research Degrees Sub-committee, (see section 9 of the Academic Regulations).

Schedule of Outcomes for Research Awards

The Research Degrees Sub-committee may determine to do one of the following depending on the circumstances and gravity of each individual case in accordance with Section 11 of the Academic Regulations.

Awards and Level	Available Penalties	
MRes – Level 7	Resubmit	Withdraw from the course/pathway of study
MPhil – Level 7	Resubmit	Withdraw from the course/pathway of study
PhD / Professional Doctorate / European PhD / PhD by Existing Published Work – Level 8	Resubmit	Withdraw from the course/pathway of study

Considerations upon awarding penalty – Research Awards

Students may submit extenuating circumstances pertaining to their suspected case for consideration by the Research Degrees Sub-Committee.