

## **Action on Academic Offences which include cheating, plagiarism and fabrication of results**

The University regards academic offences as unacceptable. The general principle underlying the university policy is that any conduct whereby a student attempts to gain an unpermitted academic advantage is an academic offence.

### **1. Definition**

#### Plagiarism:

It is an academic offence to attempt to gain for oneself, or another person, an unpermitted advantage in an assessment, eg presenting someone else's work as being one's own. It will be considered an academic offence if a) no quotation marks are used to show original author's work, and b) referencing of author's work using the Harvard System or another agreed referencing system (either within the body of the text or within the bibliography) is not used.

#### Cheating in Examinations

Cheating occurs, for example, when an examination candidate copies from the examination script of another candidate; obtains any other assistance from other candidate (or any other person); introduces into an examination room any unauthorised book (including mathematical tables), manuscripts or loose papers of any kind, unauthorised electronic devices or any source of unauthorised information; or when any person impersonates another examination candidate or allows himself/herself to be impersonated

#### Fabrication of results

It is an academic offence for a candidate to claim either to have carried out experiments, observations, interviews or any form of research which he/she has not in fact carried out or to claim to have obtained results which have not in fact been obtained.

### **2. Procedural Steps**

When tutors or examiners suspect plagiarism, cheating in examinations or the fabrication of results in any work submitted, that forms part, or all, of a unit of assessment, they shall report the matter to the School's Academic Business Manager (ABM).

The ABM will consider the work, based on the evidence supplied from the tutor/examiner, and discuss the issue with the Deputy Head of School (DHoS). If an academic offence is suspected to have taken place, a meeting will be scheduled. The meeting can be either face-to-face, via skype, or via e-mail communication.

### **3. Academic Offence Meeting**

The meeting takes place with the student, DHoS, and ABM. The tutor/examiner may also be present. The student is entitled to have to have a person of his/her choosing attend the meeting with them, such as the Students' Union Education Advisor or equivalent at the International Campuses. It is not appropriate for students to choose to bring legally qualified representatives as their 'friend'.

In the meeting the DHoS will:

- ensure the student understands the definition of an academic offence;
- ensure the student understands the nature of the alleged academic offence and why they have been invited to the meeting. All material relating to the suspected offence should be made available to the student (this does not have to be provided to the student in advance);
- ask the student if they plead guilty or not guilty to the suspected offence;
- ask the student to explain their plea and/or provide any mitigating circumstances;
- ask the student to provide a written statement which:

1. acknowledges that he or she has understood the nature of the alleged offence;
2. states whether he or she pleads guilty or not guilty;
3. provides an explanation for the plea.

#### **4. After the meeting**

In the case of taught students, if the School is satisfied that an offence has been committed, and the student admits the offence, the School may apply one of the following penalties:

- no marks will be awarded in relation to the specific material which is the subject of the academic offence (this leading to a reduced overall mark for the piece of work, dissertation, examination question or examination script);
- a mark of zero for the entire piece of course work, dissertation, examination question or examination script in which the academic offence has occurred;
- a mark of zero for the entire module in which the academic offence has occurred.

#### **5. Second academic offence**

Where a student commits a second academic offence, the School will again invite the student to a meeting to discuss the suspected work. The case will, however, then be sent to the Secretary of the Academic Offences Committee (within Registry) for consideration and action.

The Academic Offences Committee has the power to apply one or more of the following penalties:

- any of the penalties listed in 4 above;
- award a mark of zero for all the assessments in the semester (even where this will lead to a reduction in degree class). In the case of year-long modules, this penalty may affect both semesters;
- award a mark of zero for the whole year (even where this will lead to a reduction in degree class);
- require the student to take reassessments (as a result of being awarded zero marks) in the following session before being allowed to progress or complete their course;
- require the student to register with the University and enrol on modules in which they need to take reassessments (as a result of being awarded zero marks) in the following session before being allowed to progress or complete their course.

#### **6. The right to appeal**

A student who is unhappy with the outcome of a hearing may request a completion of procedures letter and put the case to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA). For more information see <http://www.oiahe.org.uk>

Students who consider that there has been a procedural irregularity which has disadvantaged the student in the manner in which the academic offences process has been conducted may write to the Director of the Academic Services Division to request a review of the case. Such requests should be sent within 30 days of the student being notified of the decision.

#### **7. Further information**

Please refer to the Quality Manual for further details:

<http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/academicservices/qualitymanual/assessment/academicoffences.aspx>

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