

Academic Dishonesty (Cheating) Policy (approved September 2008)

General statement of Policy

Students should note that Arts University Bournemouth takes cases of proven dishonesty very seriously. Where intentional cheating is proven, you may be excluded from your course. If this occurs at the end of your course, the final award may be withheld.

Please ensure that you read this policy carefully and, if you have any questions, ask your Course Leader or tutors for clarification.

1. Definitions

1.1 **Cheating** is using any means to gain an unfair advantage, for yourself or for anyone else, in assessment.

Forms of cheating may include:

1.2 **Collusion** is making a secret agreement with one or more other people for a deceitful or fraudulent purpose.

1.2.1 In peer assessment, you must not give more, or fewer, marks than the piece deserves because there is a previous agreement between you and another person.

1.2.2 You must not allow your work to be copied by another person, and you must not copy someone else's work even if they agree to it.

1.2.3 You must not allow any other person to carry out research, written or practical work on your behalf unless the brief of Learning Agreement specifically allows for this (e.g. in certain group work projects or 'live' briefs) or unless it is specified in briefs as appropriate (e.g. the 'contracting out' of certain specialist processes, not available through University facilities, to outside suppliers).

1.3 **Plagiarism** is the practice of passing off someone else's work as your own, or using someone else's work without acknowledgement. Whilst it is an accepted part of academic study to research the ideas of others to develop your own learning, it is essential to acknowledge your sources in presenting work for assessment. You must credit the author:

- When you quote or refer to words or ideas taken from a book, magazine, newspaper, song, TV programme, film, web page, letter or any other source;
- When you reproduce diagrams, pictures or illustrations;
- When you use information gained by interviewing somebody.

1.3.1 You do not need to acknowledge a source when you are writing about your own experiences, observations or conclusions, or when you are using common knowledge. Common knowledge is usually interpreted as something your reader will

already know or could easily find in general reference sources, or common sense observations.

2. Introduction to academic dishonesty

- 2.1 Tutors will encourage and help students to examine and check their own work to ensure that the work of others is correctly acknowledged before submission.
- 2.2 In order to ensure fairness in assessment for all students, tutors will actively seek to detect plagiarism by any appropriate means, including computer testing of texts for copying, internet searches and library searches.
- 2.3 The University will continue to monitor all electronic and/or internet-based methods of detection, and will not use any which may run counter to its policies on intellectual property. Students will be informed if any electronic detection methodology might store their work, and will have the option of anonymous submission.

3. Suspicion of cheating

- 3.1 If a tutor suspects an occurrence of cheating, plagiarism or collusion, they must inform the Course Leader. In the event that plagiarism is suspected, it is the tutor's responsibility to identify the alleged source. If the source cannot be identified, the case may still be progressed, but the onus of proof rests with the tutor.
- 3.2 If the Course Leader considers that there is a *prima facie* case to answer, they will meet with the student or students concerned, and with relevant tutors. This meeting is an initial opportunity for the student to indicate the sources used, and hence to show that no cheating has taken place.
- 3.3 If sufficient grounds for concern remain, the Course Leader will inform the Chair of the Examination Board, who convenes an investigative panel, normally comprising:
 - Chair of the Examination Board
 - Course Leader
 - Relevant tutors
- 3.4 The student has the right to present a case to the panel, but not to be accompanied by a friend, relative or other representative. No decision on the result of the student's assessment will be reached until the facts have been established and the issue resolved.
- 3.5 The purpose of the panel meeting is to determine the student's understanding of the subject area, and the argument(s) presented in the work. The panel will therefore usually ask a range of questions, with reference to the submission, to test the student's knowledge. This will determine whether or not there is a *prima facie* case to answer. If the panel finds that there is a case to answer, it will consider the following matters:
 - The extent and severity of the cheating (for instance, the amount of text copied without acknowledgement, and its centrality to the argument)
 - The level and academic experience of the student

- The information previously provided to the student cohort about academic dishonesty
 - The extent to which there was an intent to deceive or cheat.
- 3.6 The panel will decide the case on the balance of probabilities.
- 3.7 If the panel finds that that the case is not proven, the student will be notified and no further action will be taken. The work will be marked at face value, and the outcome recorded. No paperwork relating to the panel meeting will be kept on the student's file.
- 3.8 If the panel finds that the case is proven, the following penalties are available:
- (i) A discharge conditional on future behaviour
 - (ii) The award of a capped pass grade of 40%
 - (iii) Failure of the unit with a requirement to retrieve the assessment of the failed unit, with a maximum available mark of 40%. The panel may further decide if the unit is to be reassessed on the basis of a Retake.
 - (iv) A requirement that the student repeats the taught unit and all assessment
- 3.9 In the event that the panel considers that a more severe penalty would be appropriate, it will refer the case to the Deputy Vice Chancellor's Panel, as described below. It will also forward its recommended penalty, together with its rationale for this penalty.
- 3.10 This outcome will be reported to the student in writing within two working days of the meeting.
- 3.11 If the process is complete at this stage, the outcome will be reported to the next Examination Board and minuted. The University Secretary should be notified of the outcome of any case where a penalty is imposed.

4. Deputy Vice Chancellor's Panel

- 4.1 The Deputy Vice Chancellor's Panel is established only following the referral of a case from a panel chaired by the Examination Board. The Panel comprises the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Chair), a Dean of a different School, or their nominee; and the University Secretary; or their nominee.
- 4.2 The panel will meet as soon as is practicable, and normally within ten working days of the referral, although, as the Deputy Vice Chancellor's involvement cannot be delegated, there may be occasions where a longer time period is required.
- 4.3 The student will be given at least five working days' notice of the hearing. The documentation will comprise the recommendation of the initial panel, and all members of the Panel will receive a copy of this in advance.
- 4.4 The student has the right to attend for interview with the panel if they so wish, accompanied by a friend or another member of the University community but not by a legal representative. The person accompanying the student has a right to address the meeting but not to answer questions on behalf of the student.

- 4.5 The Deputy Vice Chancellor will nominate a Secretary to the Student Disciplinary Panel.
- 4.6 Notes will be taken of all meetings of the Panel, but no sound or other recording equipment shall be used without the consent of the Chair.
- 4.7 The case, including the recommendation of the panel, will be presented by the Chair of the initial panel. The student will be invited to present their defence, and to offer any mitigating circumstances. In the event that the student wishes to present any supporting evidence, or to call any witnesses, they are permitted to do so provided this has been notified to the Chair at least two clear working days in advance of the hearing. Witnesses whose names have not been submitted in accordance with this condition will not be permitted to give evidence save at the sole discretion of the Chair of the Student Disciplinary Panel.
- 4.8 Both the Deans bringing the case, and members of the Panel, may cross-examine the student and witnesses called by the student.
- 4.9 Once the panel is satisfied that it has heard all the evidence, it will continue its deliberations in private. It will consider the case, and will take into account:
- The extent and severity of the cheating (for instance, the amount of text copied without acknowledgement, and its centrality to the argument)
 - The level and academic experience of the student
 - The information previously provided to the student cohort about academic dishonesty
 - The extent to which there was an intent to deceive or cheat.
- 4.10 The panel will decide the case on the balance of probabilities.
- 4.11 If the panel finds that that the case is not proven, the student will be notified and no further action will be taken. The work will be marked at face value, and the outcome recorded. No paperwork relating to the panel meeting will be kept on the student's file.
- 4.12 If the panel finds that the case is proven, it will determine the appropriate penalty. The range of penalties available to the Deputy Vice Chancellor's Panel, include all those noted at para 3.8 above, but also include
- (v) A requirement that the student repeats the year.
 - (vi) Termination of studies at the University with credit awarded at the level but not for the unit. Termination of studies at the University with no credit awarded for the level at which the offence occurred.
- 4.13 These penalties may only be imposed by a meeting of the Deputy Vice Chancellor's Panel.
- 4.14 The Deputy Vice Chancellor will report the panel's decision to the student in writing within two working days of the meeting.
- 4.15 The outcome of the process will be reported to the next Examination Board and minuted. The University Secretary should be notified of the outcome of any case where a penalty is imposed.

5.0 Appeal to the Principal and Vice-Chancellor

- 5.1 If the student is dissatisfied with the outcome of the case, they may appeal in writing to the Principal and Vice-Chancellor. The letter of appeal must be lodged with the Principal and Vice-Chancellor's Office within ten working days of the date of notification of the decision.
- 5.2 A student may appeal on the following grounds:
- That due process was not followed, and that this had a material bearing on the outcome of the hearing; and/or
 - That the penalty imposed is inconsistent with the severity of offence; and/or
 - That new evidence has since become available which is pertinent to the case, but was not available at the time of the hearing; and/or
 - That the decision of the Panel was perverse, taking into account all the evidence presented.
- 5.3 The Principal and Vice-Chancellor will conduct a full review of the documentation relating to the case, including all documentation considered by the panel, and its decision. They will not normally meet with the parties concerned, but may request a meeting with the Chair of the panel to request clarification of any points raised by the student in their appeal, or to discuss the impact of any new evidence. The Principal and Vice-Chancellor will reach a judgement on the balance of the evidence, and will either:
- Confirm the decision of the Panel
 - Uphold the appeal, and impose a lesser penalty
 - Uphold the appeal, and dismiss the case
- 5.4 The Principal and Vice-Chancellor will write to the student and the Chair of the Panel to confirm his decision. This will normally be within 10 working days of receipt of the letter of appeal although, as this authority cannot be delegated, there may be occasions where a longer time period is required, and in these cases the Principal and Vice-Chancellor's Office will contact the relevant parties to explain the circumstances. The Principal and Vice-Chancellor's letter of decision will also be copied to the Dean bringing the case, and the University Secretary to enable the record of decisions to be updated.
- 5.5 There is no further process of appeal within the University. If they are still dissatisfied, the student may be entitled to refer the case to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator, details of which will be made known to them in the Principal and Vice-Chancellor's letter of decision.

All members of the University's community including staff, students, visitors and contractors have a responsibility to treat others fairly and respectfully regardless of the characteristics which may define their identity. These include the legally protected characteristics which are: Age, Disability, Gender reassignment, Marriage and Civil partnership, Pregnancy and maternity, Race, Religion or belief (including lack of belief), Sex and Sexual orientation. The University has committed to provide a working and learning environment founded on dignity, respect and equity where discrimination of any kind is treated with the utmost seriousness.

This policy has been subject to an equality analysis to ensure consideration with regard to the provisions of the Equality Act 2010.

Date of last EA review: 02/2017

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To be reviewed in 2020