



## ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT POLICY

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### 1. Academic integrity

- 1.1 Academic integrity is central to academic life, and should be a guiding principle of studying at University. We expect all students to maintain a high standard of academic integrity at all times. This means that you should demonstrate honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility in your academic work.
- 1.2 In practice, this means that you should take full responsibility for your own work; fully acknowledge the work of others where it has contributed to your own; and actively avoid any actions which seek to give you, or anyone else, an unfair advantage over others. You must report any findings honestly; and follow the academic, professional and ethical conventions which are relevant to your work.
- 1.3 Apart from meeting your obligations as part of an academic community, acting with integrity also enables you to develop, and demonstrate, the professional skills and values which are expected by employers, and which will be crucial in your subsequent professional life.
- 1.4 You should read this policy carefully, and if anything is unclear you should contact your Course Leader for advice.

### 2. Academic misconduct

- 2.1 Academic misconduct is the term used for any action or behaviour which breaches the expectation of academic integrity as set out above. Arts University Bournemouth takes academic misconduct very seriously. If an allegation of academic misconduct is upheld, a range of penalties may be issued, depending on the severity of the case. In extremely serious cases, you may be excluded from your course, or your final award may be withheld. If the offence does not come to light until after you have finished your course, the University reserves the right to investigate and, if appropriate, to rescind your award.
- 2.2 Any behaviour through which you seek to gain an unfair advantage, either for yourself or for another student, may constitute academic misconduct. The list below gives the most common examples, and a brief definition of each:

#### Plagiarism

Submitting work which you claim to be your own, but which uses 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.

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.

#### Collusion

Submitting work which you claim to be your own, but which you have completed in partnership with someone else (whether or not they are a student of the University), except where this is explicitly allowed for in the assignment brief. This may include where others have helped you, for example with technical elements of your practical work.

#### Ethical misconduct

Failing to follow the ethical protocols, including a failure to secure Research Ethics Approval or failure to comply with advice from the Research Ethics Adviser.

#### Falsification or fabrication

Falsification is claiming to have done something you have not done. This could be any form of data collection (such as observations, research or interviews) which you have not undertaken; or continuing your work after the submission deadline and falsely claiming that it was submitted in timely fashion (for example, by adding work to a submission within the studio).” Fabrication is reporting data which you have made up or otherwise know to be false, including fraudulent consent forms.

#### Contract cheating

Submitting work which you claim to be your own, but which you have purchased or commissioned from someone else (including from a commercial company via the internet). This may include where others have helped you, for example with technical elements of your practical work.

#### Recycling

This is sometimes called self-plagiarism, and is submitting the same work for more than one unit (except where this is agreed with a tutor in writing). This is not good academic conduct; it may not be considered misconduct and subject to an investigation, but you will not normally be awarded marks for work which has been assessed previously. This could result in you getting a lower mark, or even failing the unit.

### **3. Introducing you to good academic practice**

- 3.1 We recognise that students may not be familiar with academic conventions or good academic practice when they join the University. As the penalties for academic misconduct can be severe, we have a responsibility to ensure that all students are introduced to good academic practice, and warned about practices to avoid, at the start of the course.
- 3.2 Course tutors may approach this differently, but all students should have had an introduction to good academic practice before they submit their first piece of work for assessment.
- 3.3 Alongside advice from the course team, your Subject Librarians can also provide advice on good academic practice. In addition, the AUB Library website offers a detailed guide to referencing at <https://aub-uk.libguides.com/referencing/plagiarism>
- 3.3 Arts University Bournemouth takes academic integrity very seriously. It will seek to

eliminate all forms of cheating, or seeking to gain an unfair advantage. In the interest of fairness to all students, the University reserves the right to use any appropriate means to detect any form of academic misconduct. This includes computer testing of texts for copying, internet searches and library searches.

- 3.5 The University may also deploy electronic and/or internet-based methods of detection; students will be informed if any electronic detection methodology will store their work, and the ways in which this work may subsequently be used.

#### **4. General comments on the academic misconduct procedure**

- 4.1 There are three stages to the procedure. The penalties available at each stage are different, which means that the most serious cases will be considered at Stage Three, where the penalties are most severe.
- 4.2 We recognise that in the early part of your studies you may make mistakes, but we expect you to learn from these mistakes and not to repeat them. As you progress through the course, we expect you to demonstrate high levels of academic integrity at all times. If there is evidence that you deliberately sought to gain an unfair advantage, we will take this very seriously.
- 4.3 The University can conclude the process after any stage, either by imposing a penalty or by dismissing the allegation. Normally, allegations will commence at Stage One and will only progress to the next stage if the panel considers that the case may warrant a more serious penalty than it is able to impose. The University reserves the right to escalate a case immediately to a higher stage (either by starting at Stage Two, or by moving directly from Stage One to Stage Three). This will be exceptional, and will only be where there is strong evidence of very serious academic misconduct. If we make this decision, we shall explain to you we have decided to do this.
- 4.4 Notes will be taken of all meetings under this procedure, but no sound or other recording equipment shall be used without the consent of the Chair at each stage.
- 4.5 You can appeal the decision to impose a penalty at any stage. This will automatically move the case to the next stage of the procedure.
- 4.6 If your case is referred for investigation, we will not confirm any marks for the unit until a decision has been made. You should continue working on any other assessments not affected by the allegation, and submit these to deadline. You will receive results as normal for any units that are not being investigated.
- 4.7 If a second allegation is made while an investigation against you is ongoing, both allegations will normally be considered as part of the same case.
- 4.8 If an allegation relates to more than one student, each student will be asked to attend individual investigations and no outcome will be agreed until all cases have been investigated.
- 4.9 Each case will be investigated strictly on its merits; any previous allegations against you will not be relevant. However if it is decided that you have committed an offence, we will take this into account when determining the penalty. A second offence is likely to receive a significantly more serious penalty than a first offence, even if the facts of the case are the same.

- 4.10 If you are invited to attend a meeting under this procedure, but are not available at the time, you should notify the University as soon as possible. If you have good reason for not being able to attend, we will re-arrange; this will usually be within one week. We will normally only re-arrange a meeting once.
- 4.11 If you do not tell us in advance that you are unable to attend the meeting and you do not attend, the meeting will go ahead in your absence and a decision will be made in your absence based on the information available.
- 4.12 If you withdraw from your course while an investigation is continuing, we will continue the case to a conclusion (even if you decide not to attend any hearings). We will notify you of the outcome.
- 4.13 All cases within this academic misconduct procedure will be decided on the balance of probabilities.

## **5. Stage One: Course Leader investigation**

- 5.1 If any member of staff suspects that academic misconduct has occurred, they must inform the Course Leader, explaining their reasons and any evidence in support of the allegation. This may include the report from an electronic search or online plagiarism service.
- 5.2 If the Course Leader considers that there is a case to answer, they will meet with you, and with the relevant tutors. This meeting is an initial opportunity for you to respond to the allegation. You will be given at least 5 working days' notice of the meeting, and you will be provided with details of the allegation including any evidence. You will have the chance to submit any evidence in support of your case. You may be accompanied by a fellow student or member of the Students' Union; but they are not permitted to answer questions on your behalf. You will be provided with the notes of this meeting.
- 5.3 The purpose of the meeting is to investigate the allegation of academic misconduct. If the allegation relates to plagiarism, for example, the Course Leader will usually seek to determine your understanding of the subject area, and the argument(s) presented in the work. They may ask a range of questions about the work. Allegations of collusion, or of ethical misconduct, will follow the same process but it is likely that the Course Leader will wish to ask different questions.
- 5.4 The Course Leader will consider all the evidence and will determine the outcome. This will be communicated to you within five working days.
- 5.5 In reaching a decision, the Course Leader will also consider whether you have accepted the allegation, and your engagement with the process. The following outcomes are available at Stage One:
- i) There is no case to answer, and the allegation is dismissed. The work will be marked at face value, and no record of the allegation will be kept.
  - ii) The case is upheld but is considered a matter of poor academic practice with no intention to gain an unfair advantage. The work will be marked at face value, but any sections which are covered by the academic misconduct charge will be disregarded. This may mean that the work does not meet the minimum pass mark, as it may not demonstrate one or more of the learning outcomes. In this

case, you will have the usual retrieval opportunities available to you, in accordance with the academic regulations.

- iii) The case is upheld and is deemed serious / there was intent to gain unfair advantage. The case is automatically referred to Stage 2. This includes all cases where a student has previously been found to have committed academic misconduct (even where this was a matter of poor academic practice), and this is a further offence.

## **6. Stage Two: consideration by the Chair of the Subject Examination Board**

- 6.1 Stage Two investigations are required where there the Course Leader believes that you may have intended to gain unfair advantage, and / or that you deliberately engaged in academic misconduct. Usually this will be a referral from Stage One, but there may be occasions where a case is taken straight to Stage Two (for example where there is very strong evidence of an intent to mislead).
- 6.2 The meeting at Stage Two is chaired by the Chair of the Subject Examination Board. while the process is similar, the range of penalties available at Stage Two is significantly greater.
- 6.3 The Chair of the Subject Examination Board will convene a panel where they are joined by the Course Leader and any relevant unit tutors. The panel will invite you to a meeting to discuss the case. You will be given at least 5 working days' notice of the meeting, and you will be provided with details of the allegation including any evidence. You may be accompanied by a fellow student or member of the Students' Union; but they are not permitted to answer questions on your behalf. You will be provided with the notes of this meeting.
- 6.4 If the case has already been considered at Stage One, the notes and outcome of that meeting will also be available to the panel; the panel will not normally seek to repeat that investigation, but will wish to consider whether there are additional factors to take into account.
- 6.5 If the case has not been considered at Stage One, the panel will investigate the allegation of academic misconduct. If the allegation relates to plagiarism, for example, the Course Leader will usually seek to determine your understanding of the subject area, and the argument(s) presented in the work. They may ask a range of questions about the work. Allegations of collusion, or of ethical misconduct, will follow the same process but it is likely that the Course Leader will wish to ask different questions.
- 6.6 You will have the chance to submit any evidence in support of your case. You may also call witnesses if they relevant information to present; you must notify us in advance if you wish to call witnesses.
- 6.7 The Chair of the Subject Examination Board will consider all the evidence and will determine the outcome. This will be communicated to you within five working days.
- 6.8 In reaching a decision, the Chair of the Subject Examination Board will also consider whether you have accepted the allegation; your engagement with the process; the extent and severity of the misconduct; and your academic level and experience. The following outcomes are available at Stage Two:
  - i) There is no case to answer, and the allegation is dismissed. The work will be marked at face value, and no record of the allegation will be kept.

- ii) The case is upheld but is considered a matter of poor academic practice with no intention to gain an unfair advantage. The work will be marked at face value, but any sections which are covered by the academic misconduct charge will be disregarded. This may mean that the work does not meet the minimum pass mark, as it may not demonstrate one or more of the learning outcomes. In this case, you will have the usual retrieval opportunities available to you, in accordance with the academic regulations.
- iii) The case is upheld, and a minimum pass mark should be awarded for the unit.
- iv) The case is upheld, and you are deemed to have failed the unit. You will be required to retrieve the assessment, with a maximum available mark of the minimum pass mark. The panel will determine whether this reassessment should be a Referral or a Retake (final opportunity).
- v) The case is upheld, and you should be required to repeat the unit and all associated assessment, with a maximum available mark of the minimum pass mark. This penalty will normally be applied where there is evidence that you have failed to engage meaningfully with the unit, and do not have a basic understanding of the key concepts.
- vi) The case is upheld and the panel considers that it is sufficiently serious that it should be referred to Stage 3. This may include cases where a student has previously been found to have committed academic misconduct (even where this was a matter of poor academic practice), and this is a further offence, especially where the second offence is deemed serious, and with a clear intent to gain unfair advantage.

6.9 In referring a case to Stage 3, the panel will also forward its recommended penalty, together with its rationale for this penalty.

6.10 If the process is complete at this stage, and a penalty has been imposed, the outcome will be reported to the next Examination Board. The penalty will normally appear on your academic record.

## **7. Stage Three: consideration by a University academic misconduct panel**

7.1 Stage Three investigations only take place where a case is referred from Stage 2. The panel will in all cases comprise:

- Academic Lead for Standards and Quality (ALSQ)
- One academic director or nominee (not below the level of Course Leader) who has no previous involvement in the case, or prior dealings with you, for example through another procedure
- University Secretary or suitable nominee.

The ALSQ will nominate a Secretary to the panel.

7.2 The panel will meet as soon as is practicable, and normally within ten working days of the referral, although, as the ALSQ's involvement cannot be delegated, there may be occasions where a longer time period is required.

7.3 You will be given at least five working days' notice of the panel meeting. The documentation will comprise the recommendation from the Stage Two panel,

together with the notes of that meeting. All members of the Panel will receive a copy of this in advance.

- 7.4 You are not normally allowed to provide additional evidence at this stage. If there is a good reason why this evidence could not have been provided any earlier, we may allow you to present it; this will be at the discretion of the ALSQ.
- 7.5 If you want the panel to hear your version of events, we expect you to attend the meeting. You may be accompanied by a fellow student or member of the Students' Union; but they are not permitted to answer questions on your behalf. If you do not wish to attend the meeting, you can submit a statement at least 2 working days in advance. You should be aware that if you decide not to attend the meeting you will not be able to answer any questions that the panel may want to ask you. It is important that you let us know whether you expect to attend.
- 7.6 The case, including the recommendation from Stage Two, will be presented by the Chair of the Subject Examination Board. The panel will then consider any submission you wish to make (either in person or in writing), and they may wish to ask you questions to ensure they understand your case properly.
- 7.7 Once the panel is satisfied that it has heard all the evidence, it will continue its deliberations in private.
- 7.8 In reaching a decision, the panel will consider whether you have accepted the allegation; your engagement with the process; the extent and severity of the misconduct; and your academic level and experience. The outcomes available at Stage Three include all those outcomes available at Stage Two (see para 6.8 above), and in addition:
- i) A requirement that you repeat the full year of study, with all marks capped at the minimum pass mark.
  - ii) Immediate termination of studies at the University with credit awarded, including any credit achieved at your current level of study (but not for the unit/s in question). If this penalty is imposed, you will not be permitted to enrol at the University in future.
  - iii) Immediate termination of studies at the University, but with no credit awarded for the level at which the offence occurred. If this penalty is imposed, you will not be permitted to enrol at the University in future.
- 7.9 You will be notified of the outcome in writing within five working days of the meeting.
- 7.10 If a penalty is imposed, the outcome will be reported to the next Examination Board. The penalty will normally appear on your academic record.

## **8. Review by the Principal and Vice-Chancellor**

- 8.1 If you are dissatisfied with the outcome of the case, you can appeal by requesting a review by the Principal and Vice-Chancellor. You must write a letter formally requesting a review, which must be lodged with the Principal and Vice-Chancellor's Office within ten working days of the date of notification of the decision.
- 8.2 You may appeal on the following grounds:
- i) That due process was not followed, and that this had a material bearing on the outcome of the hearing

- ii) That the penalty imposed is inconsistent with the severity of offence
- iii) That new evidence has since become available which is pertinent to the case, but was not available at the time of the hearing
- iv) That the decision of the Panel was perverse, taking into account all the evidence presented.

8.3 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 you raise in your letter, 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:

- i) Confirm the decision of the Panel
- ii) Uphold the appeal, and impose a lesser penalty
- iii) Uphold the appeal, and dismiss the case.

8.4 The Principal and Vice-Chancellor will write to you and the Chair of the Panel to confirm their 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 final decision will be communicated to all relevant parties.

8.5 This is the final stage of the procedure within the University. If you are still dissatisfied, you may be entitled to refer the case to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator, details of which will be confirmed 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.

To be reviewed in 2025



**ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT: FLOW DIAGRAM**

