



HE Taught Award Regulations: Part B

Section: 3: Academic Malpractice Procedure
Version: 1.5.2
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Review: December 2017

REVISION HISTORY

Ver	Date	Author	Description
1.0	January 2014	Peter Greenall	Initial Approval of Academic Malpractice
1.1	March 2015	Scott Smith	Update to clarify panel membership
1.2	Sept 2015	Scott Smith	Addition of panel document requirements. Further guidance for cases of cheating with an additional review stage being added prior to a panel being convened.
1.3	March 2016	Scott Smith	Addition of a reference to UoS students and the University's regulations
1.4	July 2016	Scott Smith	Amendment to titles and names
1.5	December 2016	Scott Smith	Relocation of penalties from Part A to B3
1.5.1	February 2017	Scott Smith	Statements added relating to CMI: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An individual's right to report malpractice • A requirement to inform CMI of malpractice
1.5.2	September 2017	Scott Smith	Some small iterative updates and changes to penalties

APPROVAL

Ver	Committee	Date Approved	Comments
1.0	HEAB	15 Jan 2014	
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B3 INTRODUCTION

This section of the regulations does not relate to the delivery of the University of Salford or Liverpool John Moores University degrees, you may access their regulations here:

- http://www.governance.salford.ac.uk/page/academic_handbook
- <https://www.ljmu.ac.uk/about-us/public-information/academic-quality-and-regulations>

B3: Academic Malpractice has been produced following consideration of the Quality Assurance Agency's UK Quality Code.

Blackpool and The Fylde College unequivocally condemns academic malpractice including acts of cheating and plagiarism.

This malpractice is any behaviour that gives an unfair advantage to a particular student. It can usefully be divided into three sub categories: cheating, fabrication of results and plagiarism.

It is an academic offence for a candidate to commit any act designed to obtain an unfair advantage with a view to achieving a higher grade or mark than they would otherwise secure. Any attempt to convey deceitfully the impression of acquired knowledge, skills, understanding, or credentials, is a serious offence and may constitute grounds for sanctions up to exclusion.

B3.1 DETECTING CHEATING OR FABRICATION OF RESULTS

All members of the College's Staff or representatives thereof are responsible for reporting to the Student Administration Manager any instance where cheating or fabrication of results may be identified as having occurred. The Student Administration Manager will convene an Academic Malpractice Panel (AMP) and for all other cases, after consultation with the HE Academic Registrar will convene an AMP where the HE Academic Registrar believes there is a case to be answered.

B3.2 DETECTING PLAGIARISM

The primary responsibility for detecting plagiarism in student work continues to rest with the individual marker, who should be alert to the possibility of finding plagiarism in students' work, and who must always use their specialist knowledge and academic judgement in deciding what is and what is not acceptable within that subject. For example, in many subjects it is difficult to decide what common knowledge is and what should be attributed to sources, which is where the marker's expert judgement is exercised.

The College also makes use of plagiarism detection software. To ensure impartially all HE students must, wherever possible, submit assessed work electronically to tutors. This

software is only employed to assist markers in making decisions; markers will always use their specialist knowledge and academic judgement to determine whether plagiarism is evident.

The dissertations of all third year degree students will all be subject to the plagiarism detection software in order to assist markers with their judgement.

B3.3 PROCESS FOR SUSPECTED PLAGIARISM

B3.3.1 PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism can be defined as: the action of utilising or closely imitating the language / work of another author as if the product were one's own. Blackpool and The Fylde College Academic Regulations categorise any such behaviour into one of the two types below.

A clear distinction must be drawn between inexperienced academic study and writing skills (especially among first year undergraduates and international students) and deliberate deception. The former requires remedial teaching and only the latter deserves severe penalties. Intentionality is difficult to establish, so the framework allows a first offence based on "benefit of doubt", with a relatively light penalty and a requirement that the student seeks appropriate study skills advice. Subsequent plagiarism offences are more likely to be deliberate, so the penalty system becomes progressively more serious.

Ignorance of proper procedures or of good practice in academic writing is no excuse, particularly if a student has previously been accused of plagiarism or poor academic practice, advised to seek study skills help, and fails to learn the lessons.

B3.3.2 MINOR OFFENCE (Poor Academic Practice)

Minor offences would include poor referencing, unattributed quotations, inappropriate paraphrasing, incorrect or incomplete citations, or up to several sentences of direct copying without acknowledgement of the source. For classification of a minor offence it must be the marker's judgement that the affected text results from poor academic practice rather than a deliberate intent to deceive.

B3.3.3 MAJOR OFFENCE

A major offence shall be defined as copying multiple paragraphs in full without acknowledgement of the source, taking essays from the Internet without revealing the source, copying all or much of the work of a fellow student with or without his/her knowledge, submitting the same piece of work for assessment under multiple modules or two or more recorded minor offences.

B3.3.4 PLAGIARISM OPERATIONAL PRACTICE

All markers shall make a positive effort to identify possible plagiarism using their specialist knowledge, academic judgement and available software tools.

All markers shall inform their students of the procedures for detecting and dealing with plagiarism, the process and implications of not applying good academic practice will be reinforced throughout a student's tutorial sessions.

Where a piece of assessed work in the academic judgment of a marker is subject to poor academic practice, at level 3 or 4 only, the marker must consult with both the relevant programme leader and curriculum manager (or head of curriculum area where the marker is either of aforementioned people) to consider the appropriate action. If all parties are in agreement and believe that the student has committed an offence that is considered a Minor Offence they must:

- Contact the Student Administration Manager to confirm whether a warning letter has been issued to the student previously.
- Meet with the student (module tutor and programme leader) to discuss the poor academic practice and the support mechanisms that will be put in place by the academic team and HE Learning Mentors to assist the student.

If no letter has been issued previously and the student is content to accept a warning

- The programme team will complete the warning letter (Appendix B3 - C) and provide it to the Student Administration Manager who will issue the letter to the student by recorded delivery and note the offence on the student's record.

If a warning letter has been issued previously or the student is unwilling to accept a warning, the procedure set out below will be initiated.

In cases of suspected plagiarism the following must be adhered to:

- A Plagiarism Report Form is to be completed by the marker
- Included with the report should be the student's annotated work identifying which elements are deemed to be plagiarised
- The source of original information must be identified
- All documentation must be presented to a second marker for ratification

Evidence must always be provided by the marker to confirm plagiarism has occurred.

If the second marker disagrees with the findings of the marker the HE Academic Registrar will act as an adjudicator and will make a judgement on whether to continue or to close the investigation.

If the judgement is confirmed as being one of suspected plagiarism, the annotated material and the Plagiarism Report should be forwarded to the Student Administration Manager who will send to the student a copy of the assessed work with the feedback from the first and second marker (Plagiarism Report) and a copy of the software plagiarism report. Copies of all documents must be kept by Student Administration Manager and forwarded to the head of curriculum area. The Student Administration Manager will convene an academic malpractice panel. The panel will receive copies of the plagiarised work and a copy of the

first and second marker reports and the software plagiarism report. They will also receive evidence as to whether the student has attended a session regarding plagiarism and/or any other pertinent reports; all reports available to the panel must also be made available to the student.

Note: If the head of curriculum is also the marker or second marker then a nominee must be appointed.

The timing of the panel will be arranged to try to ensure the student can attend. The student may be accompanied by a friend or relative, any person accompanying a student is present to support a student and as such should not contribute to the meeting unless at the behest of the student and only when invited to do so by the Chair. The student may write a letter to outline their position regarding the allegations if they wish. If the student does not attend the panel at the agreed time and date, the panel will convene and make their decision based solely on the documentary evidence available.

A short meeting will take place before the panel meeting with panel members only to familiarise members with the case. At the panel meeting the chair may request that the marker present the evidence to the panel or it may be provided as documentary evidence only. In either case the student will be present to hear or review the evidence from the marker. The student will then be asked to present their case to the panel.

Once the panel has heard the evidence and asked for any further questions of clarification the marker, the student and anyone accompanying them will be asked to leave the meeting. The panel will then discuss the case and use the awarding body regulations guidelines for plagiarism to inform their discussions and decisions. Normally, the student will be advised of the panel decision verbally by the Chair on the day. The student will be informed in writing of the decision and if appropriate, the penalty within five working days by the Student Administration Manager. In complex situations the decision of the panel may be delayed, however the Student Administration Manager will ensure that the student is informed at each stage.

The Student Administration Manager (normally through the Programme Leader) will provide the outcomes of any plagiarism panels to the relevant Board of Examiners.

B3.4 PROCESS FOR SUSPECTED CHEATING AND FABRICATION

All staff are responsible for reporting cases of suspected cheating or fabrication. Where member of staff suspects such an incident they must complete the Academic Malpractice Report and provide it to the Student Administration Manager within, wherever possible, 24 hours. The Student Administration Manager will in turn arrange for the HE Academic Registrar to review the report. If the HE Academic Registrar agrees that there is a case to answer the Student Administration Manager will convene an Academic Malpractice Panel and inform the student of their right to attend, supplying them with the appropriate documentation.

B3.4.1 INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY (CHARTERED MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE)

Under the Chartered Management Institute's Whistleblowing Policy, it is the right of any individual, where they feel it appropriate, to report directly any instance of suspected malpractice to the professional body.

B3.5 ACADEMIC MALPRACTICE PANEL

The panel will consist of:

- From another curriculum area, an independent head of curriculum as chair
- The HE Academic Registrar or nominee
- An academic colleague from same curriculum area unrelated to the assessment or second marker
- The member of staff asserting malpractice or Achievements Officer where appropriate
- Student Administration Manager to minute the meeting and maintain records of all decisions and outcomes

B3.5.1 DOCUMENTATION AVAILABLE TO THE PANEL

The Student Administration Manager is responsible for, in most cases through the academic team, providing the following documentation to the academic malpractice panel: (document requirements will differ dependant on the type of offence)

- The Plagiarism Report Form (completed by both first and second marker) OR
- The Academic Malpractice Report Form

And

- The assessment brief(s) in question.
- The students submission(s) (annotated)
- The TurnItIn report
- The Students EBS stage report (Student Assessment Details)
- Evidence as to whether the student has attended a session regarding plagiarism and whether a warning letter have previously been issued
- The student's attendance record

In both instances, additional documentation deemed relevant to the circumstance maybe submitted by the member of staff asserting malpractice or by the student in question where either party believes it may assist the panel in their deliberations. All documentation must be provided to the Student Administration Manager for distribution to all parties prior to the meeting.

B3.5.2 EXTERNAL REPORTING

Where it is the policy of an accrediting professional body and where a suspected case of malpractice is identified, the Student Administration Manager, on receipt of an academic malpractice report, will inform the relevant body. Accrediting bodies requiring to be informed of malpractice are listed below.

Accrediting Body	Contact details	Procedure
Chartered Management Institute's	http://www.managers.org.uk/contact-us/contact-us-education-providers	https://www.managers.org.uk/~media/Angela-Media-Library/New%20EP/PolicesProcedures/Procedures/CMl%20malpractice%20and%20maladministration%20procedure.pdf

B3.6 PENALTIES

The Academic Malpractice Panel will consider all suspected cases of academic malpractice and has the following actions available to it:

- If it is determined that there has been no offence, then the academic marker shall be instructed to mark the work in question normally.
- If it is determined that there is satisfactory evidence that an offence has been committed one of the following must be considered.
 - i. Advisory letter issued (level 4 only)
 - ii. Cap a passing assessment to the minimum pass grade (examinations only).
 - iii. Scottish Qualification Authority Higher National programmes only; cap a passing assessment to the minimum pass grade (examinations only) and limit all graded units to a minimum pass grade.
 - iv. Where a student will still meet the minimum pass mark, exclude any work within the submission identified as being subject to academic malpractice practice and consider the remaining work without penalisation.
 - v. Award zero or equivalent for the assessment in question and permit its reassessment, restricted to the minimum pass mark. The module in such cases **will not** be capped.
 - vi. Award zero or equivalent for the assessment in question and permit its reassessment. The module in such cases **will** be capped.
 - vii. Award zero or equivalent for the assessment in question, permit its reassessment and restrict all modules at the same level to the minimum pass mark.

Where the offence is deemed to be most severe, the panel should make an initial recommendation for a penalty which could be applied and additionally:

- viii. Refer to the College's Stage 3 Disciplinary Panel for consideration of exclusion

Where the College's Stage 3 Disciplinary Panel does not exclude the student, the original penalty should be applied and the student informed accordingly.

The penalties above become progressively more punitive and will be applied by panels with consideration of:

- any academic writing support a student has received
- a student's level of study
- whether there have been any previous instances (including warnings for poor academic practice)
- the category concerned i.e. cheating, fabrication of results or plagiarism
- the scope of the offence

Where a student is deemed to have committed an offence the Student Administration Manager will send the student the appropriate warning letter confirming the decision and advising the student of the consequences of any further offence.

B3.7 THE PANEL LETTER

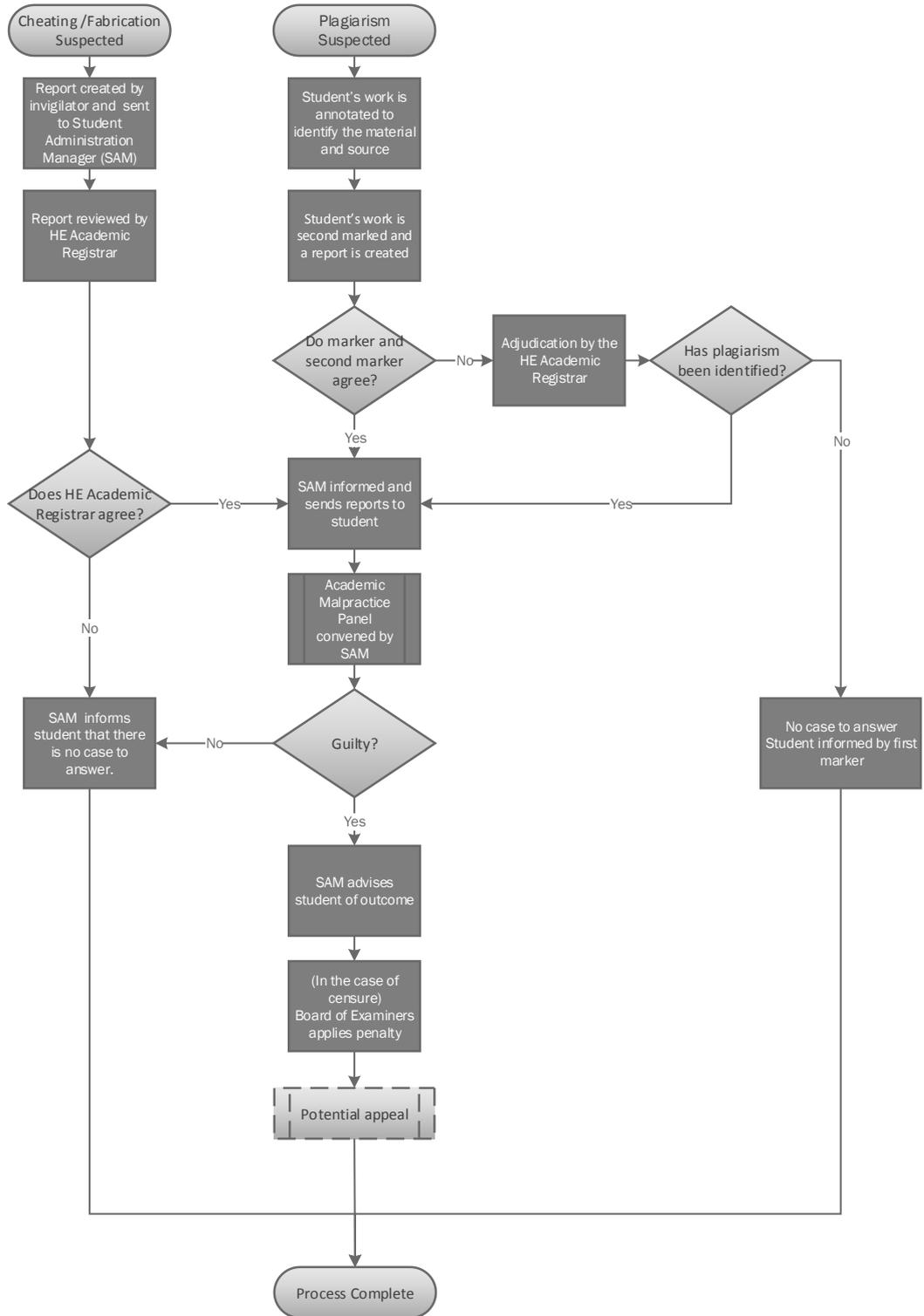
For each offence the Academic Misconduct Panel will send the student a formal letter which

- identifies what they have done wrong, and why it is wrong
- points them towards appropriate sources of study skills help
- reminds them of the need to discuss their work with academic staff if they are uncertain about how to avoid subsequent allegations
- warns of the serious consequences of subsequent offences, and spells out the sanctions that will be applied

B3.8 APPEAL

Where a student has been found guilty of malpractice and is dissatisfied with the findings of an Academic Malpractice Panel they have the right to, under the regulations set out in B9 Academic Appeals, appeal the decision.

B3: Academic Malpractice



Appendix B3 - B – Terms of Reference Academic Malpractice Panel

Terms of Reference Academic Malpractice Panel	
Chair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independent Head of Curriculum
Membership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HE Academic Registrar • Member of staff asserting malpractice or Achievements Officer where appropriate. • Academic member of staff (from the same curriculum area but unrelated to the assessment)
Minuting	HE Student Administration Manager
Frequency	As required
Summary of purpose	<p>The Academic Malpractice Panel exists as an impartial body to judge cases of alleged academic malpractice, based upon the evidence brought before it.</p> <p>The Academic Malpractice Panel will only make a decision on the malpractice itself and not take account of any other factors. Boards of Examiners will make the ultimate decision on the student's progression or award, failure and reassessment.</p>
Terms of Reference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To consider the evidence as presented. • To interview the student and appropriate employees as necessary. • To review the process taken in the identification, investigation and awarding of the penalty. • To review the record of penalties applied to ensure the penalty applied is consistent. • Where it is determined that the process of investigation, decision taken or penalty imposed is not in accordance with the College regulations.
Date of last review	September 2017

Appendix B3 - A – Poor Academic Practice Warning Letter

Ref:

Date:

Strictly Private and Confidential

Dear [student name],

Re: Warning of poor academic practice

I am writing to you regarding an assessment submission made by yourself on [submission date] for assessment [number] of [module name].

Following your meeting with the module tutor [tutor name] and myself [programme leader name], it has been decided that a formal warning letter should be issued to you to meet the requirements of the College's regulations.

Poor academic practice will almost certainly negatively influence your degree classification and perhaps even influence whether you pass your degree. It should therefore not be treated lightly. Any further instances would potentially be considered as plagiarism resulting in an investigation and possible exclusion from College.

Although this is a formal warning and will be retained on your College record it will not in any way influence any academic decisions made by a board of examiners and will only be referred to if another such case should arise. Your transcript will not include any reference to this incident.

The programme team are here to support your progress and are able to provide additional assistance, I would highly recommend that you engage with this support. The College also has support available through the HE Learning Mentors who can be contacted on email: helminfo@blackpool.ac.uk or telephone: 01253 504494.

If you have any queries regarding this letter or wish to discuss the matter further please contact your Head of Curriculum [name].

Yours sincerely

Programme Leader