

Regent College London

Academic Misconduct Procedure

1. This Academic Misconduct Procedure describes the College’s approach to detecting and investigating suspected academic misconduct by students on taught higher education programmes. It also describes the penalties which may apply to students who engage in academic misconduct.

2. The primary audiences for this procedure are:
 - College staff who are responsible for assessing student work and investigating suspected academic misconduct;
 - Students who are suspected to have engaged in academic misconduct.

Who does this procedure apply to?

If you are...	Then...
On a programme leading to an award from Pearson	All parts of this procedure apply to you.
On a programme leading to an award from the University of Bolton	This procedure does not apply to you. Your case will be managed by the College according to the University’s procedures .
On a programme leading to an award from Buckinghamshire New University	This procedure does not apply to you. You should refer to the University’s procedures .
On a programme leading to an award from St. Mary’s University	This procedure does not apply to you. Your case will be managed by the College according to the University’s procedures . However, you may appeal the outcome of the University’s academic misconduct procedure to the College (according to the procedure described in paragraphs 45 to 51) using Part B of the College’s Consolidated Appeals Procedure .
On a programme leading to an award from Regent College	All parts of this procedure apply to you.

3. If you are not sure about who gives the award at the end of your programme, please contact your Customer Support Officer (CSO).

What is academic misconduct?

4. For the purposes of this procedure, academic misconduct is gaining or attempting to gain, or helping others to gain or attempt to gain, an unfair academic advantage in formal summative assessments which contribute to a unit or module mark.

5. This procedure does not apply to formative assessment, which is intended to give feedback on progress and inform development but does not contribute to a unit or module mark. Where academic misconduct is suspected in work submitted for formative assessment, this should be addressed by feedback from College staff, thereby helping the student to avoid misconduct in subsequent work. If a student is suspected of having committed academic misconduct in formative assessment, any subsequent work should be scrutinised for misconduct very closely.

Types of academic misconduct

6. There are many different forms of academic misconduct, all of which may be the subject to the procedures described in this document. They include:

Plagiarism

7. Plagiarism is the unacknowledged incorporation in a student's work of material derived from the work (published or unpublished) of another. Examples of plagiarism are:

- the inclusion in a student's work of more than a single phrase from another person's work without the use of quotation marks and acknowledgement of the sources.
- the summarising of another person's work by simply changing a few words or altering the order of presentation, without acknowledgement.
- the use of the ideas of another person without acknowledgement of the source.
- the unacknowledged use of images (digital or otherwise) music, patents or other creative material either in the entirety or in the creation of a derivative work.
- copying the work of another student, with or without their knowledge or agreement.

Duplication

8. An example of duplication is the unacknowledged re-submission of work the student had previously submitted to gain academic credit at the College or elsewhere.

Collusion

9. Collusion is where a student:

- submits as entirely their own, work done in collaboration with another person.
- collaborates with another student in the completion of work which is submitted as that other student's own unaided work.
- enables another student to copy all or part of their own work and to submit it as that student's own unaided work. This includes uploading work to file sharing websites (such as coursehero.com), which allow other students to access this work, thereby enabling academic misconduct.

Falsification

10. Examples of falsification include:

- The falsification of data. The presentation of data in laboratory reports, projects or other forms of assessment based on experimental or other work falsely purported to have been carried out by the student or obtained by unfair means.
- The falsification of references, including the invention of references and/or false claims.

Personation

11. Personation is the assumption by one person of the identity of another person with intent to deceive or to gain unfair advantage. It may happen where:

- one person assumes the identity of a student, with the intention of gaining unfair advantage for that student.
- the student is knowingly and willingly impersonated by another with the intention of gaining unfair advantage for themselves.

Ghosting

12. Ghosting happens where:

- a student submits as their own, work which has been produced in whole or part by another person on their behalf, for example, the use of a ghost writing or commissioning service or similar.
- a student submits as their own, the output of a generative Artificial Intelligence tool such as ChatGPT.
- a student will also be guilty of academic misconduct if they deliberately make available or seek to make available material to another student (of this College or elsewhere) whether in exchange for financial gain or otherwise, with the intention that the material is to be used by the other student to commit academic misconduct.

13. Academic misconduct in whatever form is antithetical to the ethos and values of the College. Students who are found under this procedure to have engaged in academic misconduct may be liable to severe penalties including withdrawal from the College.

How can students avoid engaging in academic misconduct?

14. Students should avoid engaging in academic misconduct by always conducting themselves with academic integrity. This means taking care to ensure that any work presented for assessment is their own and fully acknowledges the work and opinions of others.

15. More specifically, academic integrity means:

- Providing full citation of all sources (books, articles, web sites, newspapers, images, artefacts, data sources, programme code etc.) which have been drawn on in the preparation of an assignment. Normally this will be done in a bibliography included in the assignment.
- Properly referencing the sources of the arguments and ideas in an assignment using a recognised referencing system (as specified in programme and unit guidelines). It is not only quotations that must be referenced but also paraphrasing of the arguments of others and the use of their ideas, even if explained in the student's own words.

- Following other guidelines for preparing and presenting coursework as defined in the relevant programme handbooks, unit guides and assignment briefs.
- Using mechanisms provided by Regent College for checking their own work, including Turnitin text matching software, and support and advice given by teaching staff.

16. Proof-reading entails the identification of grammatical, spelling or punctuation mistakes in text. The use of a proof-reading service may constitute academic misconduct if the service includes any editorial activity which entails re-writing or re-wording the student's original work beyond this.

How the Academic Misconduct procedure works

17. A diagrammatic summary of this procedure is at Annex C.

Identification

18. It is the responsibility of the College staff who are assessing student work or invigilating examinations to identify cases of suspected academic misconduct. Internal verifiers and external examiners may also identify suspected cases.

19. To support College staff, students' written work is subject to analysis for similarity with other work and to identify when Artificial Intelligence tools have been used using specialist software. (This is why all written work for assessment must be provided in a machine-readable format).

20. Where a member of College staff suspects academic misconduct, they should record the details on the Academic Misconduct Report Form and submit this to the Senior Lecturer or Module or Programme Leader, who is then responsible for assessing the severity of the alleged misconduct and deciding whether to take further action as described below.

21. The table at Annex A shall be used to determine the severity of the alleged academic misconduct. There are two levels of offence: minor and serious.

22. There are certain factors that needs to consider when determining a penalty within the penalty shown in Annex A. In deciding the severity of the penalty for the minor or serious offence, the Panel will normally take the following mitigating factors taken into account:

- The number and the seriousness of previous offences (if any)
- whether the student has admitted to the offence at the earliest opportunity
- whether the student has expressed remorse
- whether the student has a compelling personal circumstances which affected their judgement.

Informal warnings

23. Where the Senior Lecturer or Module or Programme Leader believes that there was no intent to deceive, an informal warning may be issued to the student.
24. If an informal warning is issued it should be recorded on the student's record and the Senior Lecturer or Module or Programme Leader should arrange for the student to receive appropriate training and/or advice on how to avoid committing academic misconduct again.
25. Informal warnings must not be issued where an offence that would normally be classed as serious has occurred or where prior informal warnings and/or academic misconduct has been recorded.

Minor offences

26. Where the Senior Lecturer or Module or Programme Leader determines that a Minor Offence may have occurred, a Programme Hearing will be held, normally within one month of the identification of the alleged offence.
27. The Programme Hearing has two main roles:
 - to determine whether academic misconduct has occurred; and,
 - where it is determined that academic misconduct has occurred, to recommend to the relevant Assessment Board both that a penalty be applied and what that penalty should be.
28. To determine whether academic misconduct has occurred, the Programme Hearing:
 - provides an opportunity for the student to understand and clarify the suspected academic misconduct; and,
 - provides an opportunity for the student to accept they have committed academic misconduct in the work under consideration and/or any other work they have submitted; or,
 - provides an opportunity for the student to contest or rebut the case against them.
29. Where the academic misconduct involves more than one student, the students should be invited to attend separate hearings and decisions should not be made until all hearings have been held.
30. The panel for the hearing will consist of the Senior Lecturer or Module or Programme Leader and another member of academic staff (but not the same person who assessed the work or invigilated the examination). A member of the Academic Quality team or School administration team will attend the hearing to advise on regulatory and procedural matters and shall be responsible for the official record of the hearing, which forms part of the Academic Misconduct Report Form.
31. A student whose work is to be considered by a Programme Hearing will be notified in writing, a minimum of 5 working days prior to the date of the hearing, of the following:

- the details of the suspected academic misconduct, including the work under consideration and what kind of misconduct is suspected or alleged. The most efficient way of conveying this information is to send the student a copy of the Academic Misconduct Report Form;
- the membership of the panel; and,
- their right to be accompanied/represented at the hearing by a friend or representative (but not a legal representative).

32. The student will have the right to object to a Panel member, for example on the grounds of bias. If an objection is made, it must be done no later than 2 working days prior to the Panel hearing, with supporting information as to why the Panel member is considered by the student to be unsuitable. The Nominee of Academic Quality team will consider whether the student's representation is valid, whether an alternative Panel member can be allocated in sufficient time for the meeting to continue as scheduled, or whether the meeting may need to be postponed pending further consideration.

33. If the student accepts, he or she has committed academic misconduct in the work under consideration and/or other submitted work, the hearing shall be adjourned for the panel to consider the appropriate outcome.

34. If the student contests the College's case, then the panel should consider the student's comments and then adjourn to determine whether academic misconduct has taken place, and to consider the appropriate outcome. The standard of proof under this procedure will be the balance of probabilities. This means that the panel must be satisfied that, on the evidence available, academic misconduct was more likely to have occurred than not to have occurred.

35. In reaching its decision on whether academic misconduct has occurred, the panel should disregard the student's previous record of academic misconduct.

36. If the student does not appear before the hearing, or chooses not to attend but to submit documentary evidence, the panel may proceed to hear the case if it is satisfied that proper notice of the hearing has been given to the student, and there are no grounds for believing that the student might have good and proper reasons for not attending.

37. The outcomes available to the Programme hearing are:

- where the student does not accept that he or she has engaged in academic misconduct and the panel determines that academic misconduct has not occurred, no further action;
- where the student accepts that he or she has engaged in academic misconduct, or where the panel determines academic misconduct has occurred, either to:
 - issue an informal warning (see paragraphs 23-25); or,
 - recommend to the relevant Assessment Board that a penalty be applied having regard to the guidance at Annex B.

38. The student will normally be informed in writing of the outcome of the Programme Hearing within 5 working days of the hearing.

Serious offences

39. Where the Senior Lecturer or Module or Programme Leader determines that a Serious Offence may have occurred, a School Hearing will be held, normally within one month of the identification of the alleged offence.

40. The purposes of, procedure and arrangements for, and outcomes available to, the School Hearing are the same as those for a Programme Hearing (as described in paragraphs 26 – 38) in all respects apart from the membership of the panel for the hearing, which shall be the Senior Lecturer or the Programme Leader and another senior member of academic staff.

41. Where the alleged academic misconduct involves personation or ghosting (which should always be regarded as a serious offence), the panel for the School Hearing will be required to determine whether academic misconduct has taken place by establishing the authenticity of the student's work. Annex D provides further guidance to staff, and information for students, about the approach the panel should take in these circumstances.

Notification of outcome

42. The outcome determined by the Programme or School Hearing will be notified to the student within 5 working days of the hearing. Where academic misconduct is determined to have occurred, the outcome will also be notified to the relevant Assessment Board.

43. Where academic misconduct has been committed by a student on a programme including or leading to a professional qualification or conferring practitioner status, the Programme Leader will determine whether the misconduct jeopardises the student's fitness to practise. If the Senior Lecturer or a Programme Leader deems that it does, then a Fitness to Practise panel may be initiated under the College's Fitness to Practise procedure, or the case may be referred to the relevant awarding body for action under its procedure.

Record of Academic Misconduct Offences

44. A record of admitted or found academic misconduct offences will remain on the student's file for the duration of their study at the College.

Student's rights of appeal

45. A student may appeal in writing within 10 working days of receiving the outcome of the hearing or panel. The appeal should be made to Academic Quality and include detail of the grounds on which the appeal is being made.

46. Students can appeal on one or more of the following grounds:

- that the relevant procedure was not followed properly such that the legitimacy of the decision or decisions reached is called into question;
- that the outcome is not permitted under the relevant procedure;

- that the student has new material evidence that they were unable, for valid reasons, to provide earlier in the process.

47. If the student’s appeal submission is not wholly based on one or more of the grounds set out above, or is submitted late without good reason, Academic Quality may refer some or all of it to a different procedure or reject it entirely. If it is rejected, the student will be issued with a Completion of Procedures letter explaining the rejection and details of how the student may apply to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education for an external review.

48. If the student’s appeal submission is based on one of the grounds set out above and is submitted on time or late with good reason, an Appeal Panel will be convened by Academic Quality to review the hearing or panel part of the process. The Appeal Panel will comprise two senior members of College staff with no prior involvement in the case. The student will be told who the members are, so that they may raise any objections. The Panel will consider a written submission from the student and may also talk to key staff and consider other evidence. The Panel’s consideration will not be a de facto second hearing of the case.

49. In exceptional cases, where the facts and evidence of a case are unclear, complex or contentious, the Appeal Panel may submit questions to the student making the appeal in writing and/or invite them to attend a hearing in person. In the case of a hearing, the student making the appeal shall be permitted to be accompanied by a friend, family member or student representative.

50. The outcomes available to the Appeal Panel are
- to uphold the decision of the hearing or panel, or;
 - to refer the outcome back to the same hearing or panel for reconsideration in the light of their findings through the appeal, or;
 - to require that a new hearing or panel is convened to consider the case in the light of their findings through the appeal.

51. The student will be provided with a written statement of the outcome and reasons for it, including any relevant recommendations, normally within seven days of the panel making its decision. This statement will also include a Completion of Procedures notification and details of how the student may apply to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education for an external review of the outcome.

Penalties for uploading work to file sharing websites

52. If a student is suspected to have uploaded their own work to a file sharing website (such as coursehero.com) they should be referred to the Student Disciplinary Procedure.

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<i>Policy owner</i>	<i>Academic Quality</i>

Annex A
Guidance on determining whether a suspected case of academic misconduct is minor or serious

Minor offence	Serious offence
Plagiarism	
Small amount of work reproduced without appropriate acknowledgement.	Significant amount of work reproduced without appropriate acknowledgement.
Unlikely intent was to deceive.	Likely/proven intention to deceive.
No previous formal offence.	Previous formal offence.
First semester/stage of the programme.	Later stages of the programme.
Levels HE3 and HE4 (foundation year and first year of bachelor's degree or HND)	Level HE5 and above
Collusion	
Collaborative work is apparent in a few areas, but possibly due to lack of student's/students' awareness.	Collaborative work reflects significant similarities, and is probably due to deliberate attempt to share.
Falsification	
Substantial part of the data is original to the student.	A significant amount of data is found to be fabricated.
Duplication	
A small amount of work already submitted as part of a previous assessment is being passed off as new work for another assessment.	A significant amount of work already submitted as part of a previous assessment is passed off as new work for another assessment.
Personation and ghosting	
n/a – personation and ghosting are not minor offences.	Work commissioned from another person and submitted as the student's own.
	Work submitted as the student's own which is substantially the output of a generative Artificial Intelligence tool, such as ChatGPT.

	The student is knowingly and willingly impersonated by another.
Examinations and other in-person assessments	
Communicating with someone other than the invigilator during an examination or in-class assessment on unrelated matters.	Communication during examination or in-class assessment in order to seek academic advantage.
Unauthorised material is not relevant or intentionally used.	Use of unauthorised notes or other material (including in electronic format) in order to seek academic advantage.
	Attempting to copy from another student in the examination or in-person assessment.
	Misuse of examination or in-person assessment briefs, for example gaining prior knowledge of contents of unseen paper.
	Taking material away from examination or test when instructed not to.

Annex B

Penalties for academic misconduct

Members of Programme and School Hearing panels should have regard to the following guidance in determining what penalty they should recommend in cases where academic misconduct is admitted or found to have occurred. The penalties are in ascending order of severity. The choice of penalty should be informed by the extent of any intent to deceive, any previous offences and the level at which the learner is studying. In general, lesser penalties should be recommended where the student has not intended to commit misconduct and/or where the student has not committed misconduct before and/or where the offence has occurred at Level 4 or below; whereas more severe penalties should be considered if the student has intended to deceive and/or has committed misconduct before and/or is studying at Level 5 or above.

Informal warnings must not be issued where an offence that would normally be classed as serious has occurred or where prior informal warnings and/or academic misconduct has been recorded. Please note that there is difference of penalties for Pearson and UoB as illustrated below:

Penalties for minor offences

- Informal warning (see paragraph 23 – 25 above)
- Referral to the online short course on Avoiding Academic Misconduct
- Fail attempt for the assessment component in question. Further attempt (if eligible) Recorded as RP (Referral due to Plagiarism). The refer assignment brief may differ from the original (up to the Programme Leader's discretion).

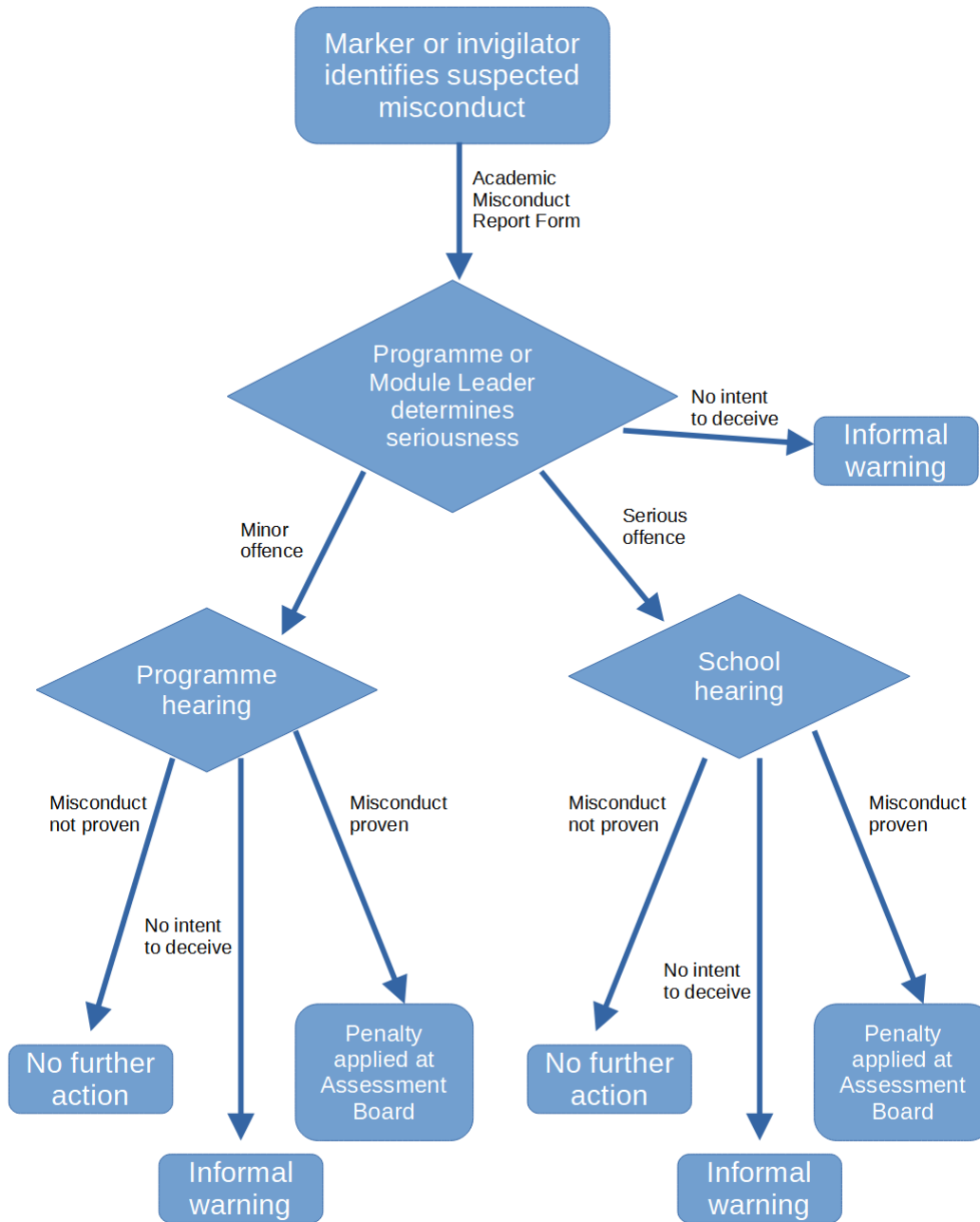
Penalties for serious offences

- Fail attempt for the assessment component in question – allow further attempt in the assessment component (if eligible) i.e. Refer. The refer assessment brief may differ from the original. Recorded as RP (Referral due to Plagiarism).
- Fail module with no further attempts. Student can continue for HN award with compensation or repeat the unit (if eligible).
- Fail module (if applicable) and programme with immediate effect with or without the full HND qualification.
- Recommend expulsion of student from the College, with or without the full HND qualification.

A School Hearing may decide to downgrade the severity of the suspected academic misconduct to minor and apply one of the penalties for minor offences.

Annex C

A summary of how the Academic Misconduct procedure works



Annex D

Guidance to School Hearings on establishing the authenticity of a student's work

Where alleged academic misconduct involves personation or ghosting (which should always be regarded as a serious offence), the panel for the School Hearing will be required to establish the authenticity of the student's work in the absence of other evidence.

The panel should begin by informing the student that it is suspected that they may not have authored all or part of the work and that the Hearing presents an opportunity for the student to demonstrate that the work is entirely their own and to confirm that the student:

- undertook the reading and research themselves;
- undertook all the preparatory work themselves;
- understands what they have written;
- wrote the piece of work themselves.

The panel should then ask questions to test the student's knowledge and understanding of the topic and the work submitted. These questions may focus on the work submitted – for example, by exploring the concepts or theories mentioned in the work – and/or on the background to it, such as the sources, data or evidence cited in the work (to check that the student recognises it) or how the work fits within the wider subject field.

The questioning may be intensive but must remain measured and objective, and the student must be given time to respond fully.

A formal record must be made of the discussion held in accordance with paragraph 30.

At the end of the Hearing the panel should thank the student for attending and adjourn (without the student present) to determine the outcome by reference to paragraph 37.

The student should be informed in writing of the outcome within five working days of the Hearing.