

ACADEMIC CONDUCT AND PRACTICE HANDBOOK

Chapter 1 – Introduction and General Principles

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Handbook is applicable for alleged academic misconduct by students only. It does not cover alleged academic misconduct by academic staff or students registered on research programmes who are covered by separate procedures, see Research Misconduct. For guidance or advice on the procedure please contact the relevant Faculty Cases Office:

- [Faculty of Environment, Science and Economy](#)
- [Faculty of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences](#)
- [Faculty of Health and Life Sciences](#)
- For students based at our Cornwall Campus: [Penryn Faculty Cases Office](#)
- For all Postgraduate Research appeals – [PGR Student Cases Office](#)

- 1.2 Students based at one of our Exeter campuses, or studying remotely, needing help with their own case **should** contact the [Students' Guild Advice Unit](#). Students based at the Cornwall campus **should** contact the [Students' Union advice Unit](#).

2. General Principles

- 2.1 The University takes poor academic practice and academic misconduct very seriously and expects all students to behave in a manner which upholds the principles of academic honesty. Academic honesty is fundamental to the values promoted by the University and no student **should** be allowed to obtain for themselves, or for another candidate, an unfair advantage. Academic honesty means never falsifying the results of any work and always giving full credit for any other persons' contributions to our own achievements.
- 2.2 The Student Cases Office, within the Office of Senior Vice-President and Registrar and Secretary, **must** have oversight of all cases of academic offences in order that they can carry out the University's reporting requirements. This will include responding to requests for information under the Freedom of Information and Data Protection Acts.

- 2.3 Information on proven cases of academic misconduct or severe academic misconduct will be available to staff who are asked to provide references for students.
- 2.4 All decisions taken under this Handbook shall take full account of natural justice, fairness and equity, and all penalties **should** be applied consistently within, and between, proceedings at Faculty/Department level and proceedings at the University level.
- 2.5 When considering cases under this Handbook the University will adopt the standard of proof 'on the balance of probabilities'.
- 2.6 This Handbook shall apply to all currently registered students on taught programmes.
- 2.7 All students will be given the chance to submit a defence (see Chapter 4, Section 5 on Arrangements for Department and Faculty level meetings).
- 2.8 Students **should** be kept informed of the progress of any case they are involved in.
- 2.9 When considering an allegation of academic misconduct or poor academic practice, marking staff **should not** differentiate between formative and summative assessments. Where potential academic offences are found within formative work, a student would usually be invited to attend an academic honesty workshop and no penalties are normally applied (see Appendix B to this Handbook for more information).
- Assessments which are non-credit bearing, such as portfolios completed as part of a Degree Apprenticeship, are considered as summative work, as they form part of the End Point Assessment (EPA). The grade for the EPA determines whether a student passes their Degree Apprenticeship and, in the case of Integrated Degree Apprenticeships, contributes to the final classification of their degree. The principles of this procedure will be applied to these submissions with the discretion to adapt the outcome (for example the specifics of the tariff) falling to the relevant Senior Academic Conduct Officer (SACO).
- 2.10 All cases of academic misconduct shall, in the outcome sent to the student, be termed as either 'poor academic practice', 'academic misconduct' or 'severe academic misconduct'. In the case of Examination Offences, the outcome shall be termed as 'examination misconduct' or 'severe examination misconduct'.

- 2.11 The University provides guidance on the appropriate penalties. Each body which imposes a penalty has the discretion to vary the penalty it can impose within its set limitations but **must** provide clear reasons as to why they have varied the penalty.
- 2.12 In all cases of academic offence, it is possible that the appropriate penalty may impact or be applied to more than just the module, assessment or examination in which the offence took place.
- 2.13 Second occurrences of academic offence, which occur in different assessment periods, will normally be treated more harshly than a first offence.
- 2.14 In general, the University will not consider mitigation in determining whether cases of academic offence took place. Students who are unable to complete an assessment, through illness or other personal circumstances, should apply for mitigation through the appropriate channels at the time that the circumstances and/or illness occurs, and such circumstances cannot be considered as an excuse for academic offences. Difficult circumstances may provide context to the actions of the student, which may be considered by the relevant body at their discretion when determining the penalty to be imposed.
- 2.15 Students who commit academic offences are subject to the normal programme rules for progression, i.e. where programmes permit, affected modules may be condoned.
- 2.16 All cases considered under this procedure should be completed within **45 working days** of the student being formally notified of the alleged offence. Where this is not possible, or where a case is deemed complex, students should be kept informed of the delay.