

University of Bradford

**Procedures for dealing with suspected
Academic Misconduct**

**(All Levels: Undergraduate, Postgraduate
and Research)**

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No changes to procedure from previous 2022 version

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1. Procedures for dealing with suspected Academic Misconduct (All Levels: Undergraduate, Postgraduate and Research)

- 1.1. Where academic misconduct is suspected to have occurred, an academic member of staff must complete an Academic Misconduct Allegation Form backed by all supporting evidence and detailing the nature and extent of the academic misconduct. All allegation forms should then be submitted to agreed Faculty contacts. Approved allegation forms must then be submitted to the Student Casework Team (Complaints and Appeals) in Registry and Student Administration for processing.
- 1.2. The Student Casework team will review all received allegation forms to ensure they are fully and correctly completed. Where this is not the case, a Casework Officer may return the form for this purpose. Where the form has been verified as complete, a Casework Officer shall assign an approved Investigating Officer who will determine whether a breach has occurred, and whether this is minor or major as defined below.
 - 1.2.1. A Minor breach shall be defined as any first or second breach at all study levels, except where the allegation of academic misconduct allegation may fall into the definition of a Major breach.
 - 1.2.2. A Major breach is defined as any of the following:
 - a. A third or subsequent breach at all study levels.
 - b. A first breach at levels 6, 7 or 8 where the assessment is a final major project, a dissertation or thesis.
 - c. Multiple breaches (three or more assessments) at any level where the academic misconduct is considered to be deliberate, calculated and extensive.
 - d. A second breach following a first Major breach.
 - e. All suspected misconduct of obtaining an unauthorised copy of an examination paper, being a party to misrepresentation in relation to an examination.
 - f. Suspected contract cheating.

2. Minor Breach

- 2.1. Where a breach has been determined as 'Minor', an Investigating Officer from the student's Home Faculty shall investigate and determine the appropriate penalty from the penalty tariff (Appendix A). The Student Casework Team shall write to the student, outlining the breach, the penalty to be imposed and referring the student to the Library's Plagiarism Awareness Programme or an Academic Skills Tutorial for further support as appropriate.
- 2.2. On determining details of the Minor breach, the investigator's findings will be communicated to the student in writing by the Student Casework Team. The student's

Personal Academic Tutor and / or Supervisor and Faculty Programme Administrative staff and (where needed) the Student Records team will also be informed by the Student Casework Team.

- 2.3. Where the student refutes the decision or believes that there was an error or procedural irregularity in the way the penalty tariff was applied, they shall have the opportunity to appeal. In such instances the case will be considered by an academic misconduct panel.

3. Appeal against a Minor Breach

- 3.1. The academic misconduct appeal panel (minor breach) will comprise an academic member of staff from another Faculty and one member of Professional Services staff who will act as secretariat and advise the panel on procedural matters.
- 3.2. The student will be invited to attend the appeal panel and will be provided with copies of the documentation presented to the panel one week in advance of the panel date. The student has the right to be accompanied, normally by a member of the Students' Union or the University. A student may not bring legal representation to this meeting without prior consent obtained from the Academic Registrar, which will be granted only in exceptional circumstances.
- 3.3. Where the appeal panel **does not uphold** the original decision, on the balance of probabilities that the suspected misconduct has occurred, the student shall be informed that they have been exonerated, that no further action will be taken, and their work will be marked as normal.
- 3.4. Where the appeal panel **upholds** the original decision, on the balance of probabilities that the suspected misconduct has occurred, the panel will either confirm the breach band determined at the misconduct review stage or impose a lower breach band. The panel cannot raise the breach band from that initially imposed prior to the appeal. The student will also be referred to University support services to access further help and guidance including from the Library and Academic Skills.
- 3.5. The student, their Personal Academic Tutor and / or Supervisor and Faculty Programme Administrative staff will also be sent copies of the outcome of the appeal panel hearing by the Student Casework Team. This will clearly state the process undertaken and the rationale for the outcome determined by the appeal panel within one week of the panel's review. Faculty Programme Administrative staff will inform Module Leaders of the outcome.
- 3.6. This marks the end of the appeal stage for Minor breaches. The student will be issued with a 'Completion of Procedures' letter confirming that they have exhausted the University's internal appeals process relating to academic misconduct and advising that they may refer the outcome of their case to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) for review.

4. Major Breach

- 4.1. All breaches determined as 'Major' will be investigated independently by an academic misconduct panel (major breach) on behalf of Senate.

- 4.2. The academic misconduct panel will comprise three academic members of staff from Faculties outside of the student's home Faculty, and a representative from the Student Union. One of the academic members of staff will be assigned as Chair. A member of staff independent from the course – usually the Student Casework Manager or a senior representative – will act as secretariat and advise the panel on procedural matters.
- 4.3. Where the student has a previous Major breach of academic misconduct or has appealed against a Minor breach, the panel must not include anyone who sat on the previous panel. In such cases an independent senior member of Faculty – usually an academic member of staff – shall hear the case.
- 4.4. The student will be invited to attend the panel and may be accompanied by a friend or a representative from the Students' Union. The student will be provided with copies of the documentation in the case file to be presented to the panel one week in advance of the panel date.
- 4.5. The student will be given an option to submit a written response to the suspected academic misconduct report. This is not essential and the student will have the opportunity to respond to the allegation during the panel hearing. The student may submit a written response in advance of the panel date if they are unable to attend in person, which should confirm that they agree for a panel to proceed in their absence.
- 4.6. Where the panel determines that academic misconduct **has not** occurred, on the balance of probabilities, the student shall be informed that they have been exonerated, that no further action will be taken, and their work will be marked as normal.
- 4.7. Where the panel determines academic misconduct **has** occurred, on the balance of probabilities, they will impose a breach in line with the breach points tariff guide at Appendix A and refer the student to University support services to access further help and guidance including from the Library and Academic Skills.
- 4.8. Where the panel recommends the expulsion of a student from the University, or the rescinding of a degree already awarded by the University, this will be presented to Senate for their explicit approval by the Academic Registrar.
- 4.9. The student and their Personal Academic Tutor and / or Supervisor, Faculty Programme Administrative staff and (where needed) the Student Records team will be sent copies of the outcome of the panel by the Student Casework Team. This will clearly state the process undertaken and the rationale for the outcome determined by the panel. Faculty Programme Administrative staff will inform Module Leaders.

5. Appeal against a Major Breach

- 5.1. The student may appeal against the conclusion (i.e. proven or not proven) or breach of the academic misconduct inquiry panel where either:
 - 5.1.1. There is new evidence that was not available to the panel at the time of their deliberations; or

- 5.1.2. There is evidence that University procedures and/or guidance have not been implemented correctly; or
 - 5.1.3. The breach points tariff was incorrectly applied.
- 5.2. The Student Casework Team will review the evidence on which the appeal is based and will determine whether there is sufficient evidence to warrant referral to an Investigative Committee of Senate.
- 5.3. The Investigative Committee of Senate will comprise:
 - 5.3.1. The Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic, Innovation and Quality) or a Pro Vice Chancellor or designate.
 - 5.3.2. Three independent staff members of Faculty – usually academic members of staff.
 - 5.3.3. One member of staff, independent of the school/service in which the course is based; and
 - 5.3.4. An elected officer of the Students' Union.
- 5.4. The student will be invited to attend the Investigative Committee. As in section 9.2 above, the student has the right to be accompanied, normally by a member of the Students' Union or the University. A student may not bring legal representation to this meeting without prior consent obtained from the Academic Registrar, which will be granted only in exceptional circumstances. The student will be provided with copies of the documentation in the case file presented to the Investigative Committee one week in advance of the panel date.
- 5.5. Where the Investigative Committee determines that academic misconduct **has not** occurred after reviewing the evidence, the student shall be informed that they have been exonerated, that no further action will be taken, and their work will be marked as normal.
- 5.6. Where the Investigative Committee determines that academic misconduct **has** occurred, they will either confirm the breach recommendation of the original academic misconduct panel, or impose an alternative breach based on the published breach points guide at Appendix A.
- 5.7. Appeal outcomes will be shared with the student, their Personal Academic Tutor and / or Supervisor and Faculty Programme Administrative staff. Faculty Programme Administrative staff will inform Module Leaders. The student will also be referred to University support services to access further help and guidance including from the Library and Academic Skills.
- 5.8. Where the Investigating Committee recommends the expulsion of a student from the University, or the rescinding of a degree already awarded by the University, this will be presented to Senate for their explicit approval by the Academic Registrar.

5.9. This marks the end of the appeal stage for Major breaches. The student will be issued with a 'Completion of Procedures' letter confirming that they have exhausted the University's internal appeals procedure relating to the case of academic misconduct and advising that they may refer the outcome of their case to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) for review.

6. Timescales

- 6.1. The University sets an expectation that incidents of suspected academic misconduct should normally be reported within six weeks of the assessment date after which time the Associate Dean, Learning and Teaching in conjunction with the Academic Registrar, will authorise investigation being progressed.
- 6.2. Where in the view of the Student Casework Team, the evidence presented is sufficient to support the report of suspected academic misconduct, the team will write to the student within one week of receipt, detailing the report and providing a copy of the evidence presented by the Faculty.
- 6.3. The Student Casework Team will forward the case file to an assigned Investigating Officer within one week of receipt.
- 6.4. An instance of suspected academic misconduct shall normally be investigated within six weeks from the date of the allegation report. Investigation timescale may vary depending on complexity of the case and any associated extenuating circumstances that affect the typical timeframe.
- 6.5. Students can appeal the outcome of a case of Academic Misconduct within two weeks from the date of the decision.
- 6.6. Where a student remains unsatisfied following conclusion of the University's internal appeal against the Academic Misconduct Outcome process, the student can raise a complaint with the Office of the Independent Adjudicator **within 12 months** of the date of the Completion of Procedures letter.

7. Sources of Support

- 7.1. Student Advisors at the Students' Union are available to help students understand the content of suspected academic misconduct reports and to assist with their written responses where needed. Students are signposted to contact the Students' Union by email to: ubu-advice@bradford.ac.uk or by phone on 01274233300.
- 7.2. Students found to have committed Minor and Major breaches will be referred to the University of Bradford Library for support in completing the Plagiarism Awareness Programme by communicating outcomes of case findings to lib-breach-group@uni.bradford.ac.uk. Students can also make appointments to speak to their subject Librarian about all things 'Academic Integrity' by visiting [Library Subject Support](#) and can attend an Academic Skills Workshop by visiting [Academic Skills Advice](#).

- 7.3. The University makes online materials on good academic practice and referencing accessible to students via [Canvas](#).
- 7.4. The University appreciates that students may require support from time to time with mental health and wellbeing challenges. Where students declare this, or any other disability, to the Student Casework team at any point, including during the course of an academic misconduct investigation, students are promptly referred to the Disability and / or Mental Health Service team where they can register for [Counselling and Mental Health Advice](#) support, or email mhadvice@bradford.ac.uk.
- 7.5. In all cases, reasonable adjustments will be made to consider the student's health or known disability. This may include provision of support at any panel or committee meetings, for example a signer or note-taker assigned to a student as part of their Learning Support Plan. Students will be referred to the Disability Service for advice, guidance and support on reasonable adjustments where they are identified.
- 7.6. The University understands that some students who are speakers of English as a second language may require support during Academic Misconduct Panel and Investigative Committee meetings. The student will be signposted to the Students' Union to determine on a case-by-case basis, whether this would be needed. Where a need is confirmed and agreed, an interpreter will need to be requested up to one week in advance of the case in order for the Chair of the panel to determine suitability / consider the rationale and other factors.

8. Student's Assessment or Progression whilst Cases are Pending Resolution

- 8.1. In order not to disadvantage students who have cases which are pending consideration and resolution, Faculties will permit such students to undertake supplementary assessment at their own risk in the modules which are under investigation. It should be made clear to affected students that any notification of supplementary assessment is independent of and separate from any outcome of the decision on the module(s) in question and should in no way be taken as an indication thereof.
- 8.2. Likewise, students who would otherwise be repeating or progressing into the next stage of their studies will be permitted to re-register, on the understanding that the resolution of their case may necessitate their withdrawal from their course.

Appendix A: Penalty Tariff Guide

1. Plagiarism in groupwork. If plagiarism is confirmed, and it is clear that it was the act of specific member(s) of the group, then the appropriate penalties may be applied to those specific members. If plagiarism is confirmed but it is still unclear who in the group was the originator(s), then all students in the group will have the appropriate penalties applied.

2. In a case of alleged collusion, where for one or more of the students it is a second or subsequent case of academic misconduct, it will be automatically referred to an academic misconduct panel. This is for all students named in the allegation regardless of whether it is another student's first breach and has been deemed a Minor breach. However, the penalty imposed on each individual will still be in line with the penalty tariff below.

3. A breach will be deemed sequential if, at the time of committing the second breach, the student could reasonably be assumed to be aware that he or she was committing a second breach.

The following penalties may be imposed:

Please note: there are different penalties listed in the tariff for unauthorised copy of examination paper, misrepresentation in relation to an exam, contract cheating and providing assessments for the purpose of academic misconduct.

Breach Type	Band	Points	Available Penalties
Minor	1	280 - 329	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal Warning • Resubmission for a maximum element mark of 40% for UG provision, 35% for PGT provision • Resubmission for a maximum module mark of 40% for UG provision, 35% for PGT provision
Minor	2	330 - 379	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal Warning • Resubmission for a maximum element mark of 40% for UG provision, 35% for PGT provision • Resubmission for a maximum module mark of 40% for UG provision, 35% for PGT provision
Major	3	380 - 479	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resubmission for a maximum module mark of 40% for UG provision, 35% for PGT provision. • Resubmission for a maximum module mark of zero
Major	4	480 - 534	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resubmission for a maximum module mark of zero • No opportunity to resubmit permitted

Breach Type	Band	Points	Available Penalties
Major	5	525 - 559	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resubmission for a maximum module mark of zero • No opportunity to resubmit permitted • Permanently excluded from the University with any credit and eligible qualification awarded
Major	6	560 +	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No opportunity to resubmit permitted. • Permanently excluded from the University with any credit and eligible qualification awarded
Major		Admission Exam only	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resubmission after a period of 6 months

Please note, where a student is required to resubmit for a maximum module mark of zero any academic credit achieved from this module, if passed, will count towards the student's award but a module mark of zero will contribute to the student's overall award classification.