



Procedure for

## ***HE Academic Malpractice***

Approved on

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Approved by

Academic Board

This Procedure will be subject to review in **5 years** of the approval date or earlier if required. This Procedure refers to the New College Durham Policy on Academic Integrity. This Procedure should be read in conjunction with the relevant policy. If you require this document in an alternative format and/or language, please contact [records@newdur.ac.uk](mailto:records@newdur.ac.uk)

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## **Footnote**

In an effort to keep costs to a minimum a conscious decision has been made not to print out this document and it would be appreciated that you refer to the copy and relevant Appendices available on the Intranet.

## Contents

<b>Section</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Page</b>
1.	Introduction	3
2.	Suspicion of Academic Malpractice	3
3.	Student Admission of Academic Malpractice During the Suspicion Stage (Investigation Meeting)	4
4.	The Academic Malpractice Panel	5
5.	Academic Malpractice Panel Membership	6
6.	Outcomes of the Academic Malpractice / Investigation Meeting	7
7.	Recording of Academic Malpractice	7
8.	Academic Appeal	8

## 1. Introduction

New College Durham is committed to developing a culture of academic integrity and to conducting fair and equitable assessment for all students. Academic integrity involves a commitment to the core values of honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility in all academic undertaking. The submission of student work for summative assessment is based on the principle that the work is their own.

This procedure covers all Higher Education provision (including higher apprenticeship provision) at New College Durham and must be used in conjunction with awarding body requirements.

This procedure uses the Academic Misconduct Benchmarking Research (AMBeR) Tariff when investigating all allegations of academic malpractice (Appendix 2). Each case will be reviewed individually based on evidence provided to ensure fairness to all students.

Types of Academic Malpractice can be found in Appendix 1.

## 2. Suspicion of Academic Malpractice

The following information provides the steps to take if academic malpractice or other forms of unfair practice are suspected.

### a. Examination/Controlled Assessments

If the alleged academic malpractice takes place under examination/controlled assessment conditions:

- i. The invigilator will forward the allegation details to the Academic Registrar on the same day.
- ii. The Academic Registrar will ensure the evidence is provided to the Programme Leader within 24 hours.
- iii. The student will be informed by the Programme Leader of the suspected allegation and that any evidence from this meeting will be presented to an Academic Malpractice Panel/Investigation should the allegation require further investigation.
- iv. The Programme Leader in conjunction with the Curriculum Manager will determine if the allegation requires further investigation.

- v. If further investigation is required, the Programme Leader will submit the academic malpractice investigation report and evidence to the HE Administrator ([HEAdmin@newdur.ac.uk](mailto:HEAdmin@newdur.ac.uk)) within 2 College days.
- vi. If it is deemed no further investigation is required, no further action will be taken.

**b. Written Coursework**

If a member of staff suspects a case of student academic malpractice:

- i. They must advise the Programme Leader.
- ii. The student will be informed by the Programme Leader of the suspected allegation and that any evidence from this meeting will be presented to an Academic Malpractice Panel/Investigation should the allegation require further investigation.
- iii. the Programme Leader in conjunction with the Curriculum Manager will determine if the allegation requires further investigation.
- iv. If further investigation is required, the Programme Leader will submit the academic malpractice investigation report and evidence to the HE Administrator ([HEAdmin@newdur.ac.uk](mailto:HEAdmin@newdur.ac.uk)) within 2 College days.
- v. If it is deemed no further investigation is required, no further action will be taken.

**3. Student Admission of Academic Malpractice During the Suspicion Stage (Investigation Meeting)**

If the student admits to the allegation of academic malpractice during the suspicion stage, the Programme Leader must be informed immediately. Student admission will prompt an academic malpractice investigation meeting. The proceedings for the Investigation Meeting are as follows:

- a. The Programme Leader must inform the HE Administrator ([HEAdmin@newdur.ac.uk](mailto:HEAdmin@newdur.ac.uk)) within 2 College days to arrange an investigation meeting.
- b. The investigation meeting will comprise the Programme Leader, a representative from HEDQU, the student (optional attendance) and a secretary (for notetaking/informing the student/HEDQU of the outcome (see Section 6).
- c. The investigation meeting has the authority to determine an outcome using the AMBeR Tariff guide and evidence provided, without the need for an Academic Malpractice Panel.

- d. The student will be notified officially by the secretary (email with letter attached) of the outcome within 2 College days of the Academic Malpractice Panel, using one of the academic malpractice advisory letters, and enclosing a student support action plan, if relevant (see Section 6).
- e. The student can appeal against the outcome (see Section 8).

#### 4. The Academic Malpractice Panel

The purpose of the Panel meeting is to:

- a. consider allegations of academic malpractice and;
- b. determine an outcome based upon the AMBeR tariff and the findings of the panel.

Note: if the student admits to the academic malpractice allegation during the suspicion stage, an investigation meeting will be arranged instead of an academic malpractice panel (see Section 3).

Proceedings for the Academic Malpractice Panel are as follows:

- a. The HE Administrator will arrange for an Academic Malpractice Panel to take place within 10 College days following the reporting of the allegation (see Section 2).
- b. The student will be informed by the HE Administrator (working with HEDQU) of the nature of the academic malpractice offence and the date of the Academic Malpractice Panel as soon as it is arranged, stating;
  - i. the reason for their attendance being required;
  - ii. a copy of any relevant evidence;
  - iii. the right to seek advice from the Students' Union ;
  - iv. the right to accompaniment/representation. This cannot be a paid professional advocate;
  - v. the right to submit a written statement to the Panel concerning the alleged offence in advance of the meeting if they wish to do so.
- c. The Chair will introduce the meeting and process.
- d. All panel members and attendees will introduce themselves and their role.
- e. The Chair will state the nature of the allegation.
- f. The academic member of staff and the student/representative in turn will present their case and can be questioned by panel members and attendees. Both sides

can ask questions, seek clarification and provide explanations of points which have been raised. (If the student admits to the allegation during the Panel investigation, lines of questioning may be reduced).

- g. The Chair will draw the discussion to a close and ask for any closing statements to be made by the student/representative and member of staff presenting the case if relevant.
- h. The academic member of staff and the student (and representative) will leave and the panel members will consider their decision.
- i. The panel members will determine an outcome based on the evidence presented and the AMBeR tariff.
- j. When a decision has been reached the student (and representative) will be invited back into the meeting and informed of the findings and decisions of the Panel. The student will be provided with an opportunity to seek any clarification.
- k. The student and the Programme Leader (or delegate) will be notified officially by the secretary (email with letter attached) of the outcome within 2 College days of the Academic Malpractice Panel, using one of the academic malpractice advisory letters and enclosing a student support action plan, if relevant (see Section 6).
- l. the student can appeal against the outcome (see Section 8 for further guidance)

Note: If during the proceedings new evidence is brought forward which needs further investigation, the meeting may be adjourned and a time and date agreed for it to be reconvened.

An Academic Malpractice Panel may still proceed without the attendance of the student. If the student is unable to attend owing to exceptional circumstances and has notified the Chair at least 24 hours before the Panel takes place, the Panel can adjourn its proceedings to a later date.

## **5. Academic Malpractice Panel Membership**

The membership of the Academic Malpractice Panel will be:

- a. A Chair (normally the Head of Higher Education or delegate)
- b. A representative from HEDQU;

- c. An experienced member of academic staff (Higher Education) from outside the School where the academic malpractice case has occurred;
- d. A Secretary to the Panel.

NB. If the allegation relates to exam malpractice, a member of Academic Registry will be invited to join the Panel

Attendees:

- a. Student accused of the offence (a representative or friend can accompany the student).
- b. Member of staff raising the allegation.

## 6. Outcomes of the Academic Malpractice Panel/Investigation Meeting

The following outcomes will be considered following cross referencing with the AMBeR Tariff (Appendix 2) and available evidence, which will be determined at an academic malpractice panel/investigation meeting:

Outcome A: No further action.

Outcome B: 0% awarded for first submission owing to academic malpractice, second submission capped at pass mark (with a student support action plan implemented).

Outcome C: 0% awarded for second submission owing to academic malpractice, opportunity to re-study at student's own cost (with a student support action plan implemented).

Outcome D: The student is withdrawn from the programme.

The outcomes will align to validating body regulations, and PSRB requirements where relevant. This will be clarified to the student in the advisory letter following the determination of an outcome.

## 7. Recording of Academic Malpractice

All outcomes of academic malpractice (except for outcome A) will be held on the student's file for the duration of enrolment on the programme plus 6 years or the time of sanction plus 6 years. Determinations (recommendations for OU validated

programmes) will be presented at the next available assessment board and HEDQU will also maintain a central log of academic malpractice offences for monitoring and evaluation purposes.

## **8. Academic Appeal**

A student has the right to ask for any determination to be reviewed through the normal New College Durham Academic Appeal Procedure:

- a. Any grounds for review are solely limited to concerns regarding new evidence of the academic malpractice case becoming available and administrative or procedural error.
- b. The student must submit their appeal within 10 College days of notification of the Academic Malpractice Panel determination.

**End of Procedure.**

## Appendix 1: Definitions of Academic Malpractice

Types of academic malpractice include but are not limited to:

- 1. Plagiarism** This is a form of cheating in which the work of others is passed off as the student's own. This may include copying and pasting text from the internet, copying segments of text from a book or journal article or copying a visual or sound image. It also includes copying from another student in an exam. Plagiarism may be accidental or deliberate; in either case, it is unacceptable. It is the student's responsibility to acknowledge the sources from which they have drawn ideas, arguments, conclusions or evidence.
- 2. Self-Plagiarism** This is a form of cheating in which a student submits assessed work which has, in parts or total, been submitted for assessment on a previous occasion as part of either their current programme or a previous programme.
- 3. Collusion** This is a form of cheating in which two or more students or a student and a staff member work together on a piece of work which was meant to be completed by an individual student. This includes staff completing work on behalf of the student, aiding in plagiarism and excessive coaching.
- 4. Inappropriate Paraphrasing** This is a form of cheating in which the student takes the ideas, arguments or conclusions of another person and passes them off as their own by changing just a few words or the order of the original sentences. This is different to true paraphrasing where the original writer's meaning is respected by the student using their own words to explain an idea. The original idea is attributed to the author and fully referenced.
- 5. Contract Cheating** This is where a student knowingly approaches an individual, group or organisation to obtain assessments/have assessments written on a paid or unpaid basis and claim it is their own work.

Students submitting their work to a contract cheating company (essay mill) either on a paid or unpaid basis.

- 6. Deception** This is a form of malpractice by which information is falsified within a piece of assessed work. The information presented by the student is falsely purported to have been gathered by the student or obtained by unfair means. This includes the fabrication of references and research or a bibliography as part of an assessment.

- 7. Cheating in Examinations or Time Constrained Assessment** This is a form of malpractice where there is an infringement of the rules governing the conduct of examinations or other time constrained assessments. This can include, but is not limited to, the use or possession of unauthorised books, notes, electronic devices or other materials. It also includes attempting to impersonate or impersonation of another individual due to be sitting a specific assessment. An examination is defined as assessment within controlled conditions, subject to invigilation and a fixed time period for the candidate to complete the required work.
- 8. Aiding and Abetting** Providing materials to another person which allows for these materials or information to be used improperly.
- 9. Attempting to obtain Special Assessment Consideration by Offering Inducement of Favours** This is a form of malpractice where a student attempts to influence the decision of a member of staff responsible for assessing the assignment. Inducements can include, but are not limited to, offering money, gifts etc
- 10. Providing false information when submitting a mitigating circumstances application**  
This is a form of cheating where a student deliberately gives false/inaccurate information as part of an application submitted for consideration by a Mitigation Panel.

## Appendix 2: AMBeR Tariff Guidelines

Points are assigned based on the following criteria:

### History/offence

1st Time	<b>100 points</b>
2nd Time	<b>150 points</b>
3rd/+ Time	<b>200 points</b>

### Amount/extent

Below 5% <b>AND</b> less than two sentences	<b>80 points</b>
As above but with <b>critical aspects*</b> plagiarised	<b>105 points</b>
Between 5% and 20% <b>OR</b> more than two sentences but not more than two paragraphs	<b>105 points</b>
As above but with <b>critical aspects*</b> plagiarised	<b>130 points</b>
Between 20% and 50% <b>OR</b> more than two paragraphs but not more than five paragraphs	<b>130 points</b>
As above but with <b>critical aspects*</b> plagiarised	<b>160 points</b>
Above 50% <b>OR</b> more than five paragraphs	<b>160 points</b>
Submission purchased from essay mill or ghostwriting service †	<b>225 points</b>

*\*Critical aspects are key ideas central to the assignment*

*† Some institutions may consider this to be a separate form of academic malpractice*

### Level

Level 4/Yr1	<b>70 points</b>
Level 5/Yr2	<b>115 points</b>
Level 6/Postgraduate	<b>140 points</b>

### Value/weighting of assessment

Standard weighting	<b>30 points</b>
Large project (e.g. final year dissertation)	<b>60 points</b>

### Other

Evidence of deliberate attempt to disguise plagiarism by changing words, sentences or references to avoid detection **40 points**.

## Outcomes awarded based on the points

In all cases an outcome letter is sent to the student and other than Outcome A – no further action, a record of the outcome is kept on the student’s file.

Points	Available Outcomes (select one)
280 - 329	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No further action beyond formal warning</li> <li>First submission awarded 0% - second/re-submission required, capped at 40%</li> <li>Second/re- submission awarded 0% - student recommended for retake opportunity at own cost at Assessment Board (retake opportunity grading follows academic regulations)</li> </ul>
330 - 379	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No further action beyond formal warning</li> <li>First submission awarded 0% - second/re-submission required, capped at 40%</li> <li>Second/re- submission awarded 0% - student recommended for retake opportunity at own cost at Assessment Board (retake opportunity grading follows academic regulations)</li> </ul>
380 - 479	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>First submission awarded 0% - second/re-submission required, capped at 40%</li> <li>Second/re- submission awarded 0% - student recommended for retake opportunity at own cost at Assessment Board (retake opportunity grading follows academic regulations)</li> </ul>
480 - 524	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>First submission awarded 0% - second/re-submission required, capped at 40%</li> <li>Second/re- submission awarded 0% - student recommended for retake opportunity at own cost at Assessment Board (retake opportunity grading follows academic regulations)</li> <li>Awarded 0% no opportunity for resubmission/retake</li> </ul>
525 – 559	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>First submission awarded 0% - second/re-submission required, capped at 40%</li> <li>Second/re- submission awarded 0% - student recommended for retake opportunity at own cost at Assessment Board (retake opportunity grading follows academic regulations)</li> <li>Qualification reduced (<u>e.g.</u> Honours -&gt; no Honours)</li> <li>Withdrawn from institution but credits retained</li> <li>Withdrawn from institution with credits withdrawn</li> </ul>
560+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Module awarded 0% - no opportunity to <u>resit</u>, and credit lost</li> <li>Award classification reduced</li> <li>Qualification reduced (<u>e.g.</u> Honours -&gt; no Honours)</li> <li>Withdrawn from institution but credits retained</li> <li>Withdrawn from institution with credits withdrawn</li> </ul>