

HE Academic Misconduct (Royal Agricultural University)

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This procedure will support the equitable attainment of awards and ensure that any cases of suspected plagiarism, cheating in exams or other academic misconduct are dealt with fairly, consistently and appropriately for all full-time and part-time Higher Education students.

2. Responsibilities

- 2.1. The Deputy Principal has responsibility for the oversight and review, as necessary, of this procedure.
- 2.2. HE Academic Leads will act as the Chair of the Academic Misconduct Committee.
- 2.3. The HE Administration Officer will act as Secretary, schedule meetings and write to students in relation to the procedure and with panel and committee outcomes.

3. Method – Allegation of Academic misconduct

- 3.1. The marker or exams officer must notify the HE Academic Lead with a covering statement and any relevant supporting evidence once a suspected case of cheating, plagiarism or academic misconduct is identified.
- 3.2. Where the HE Academic Lead is the internal examiner suspecting cheating, plagiarism or other unfair practice, they will refer the matter to an experienced colleague who is a member of the Programme Team who will act as the HE Academic Lead 's nominee.
- 3.3. For first year undergraduates, module leaders will deal with issues of poor referencing verbally until Christmas with students required to resubmit an assignment for a maximum mark of 40%
- 3.4. The HE Administration Officer will send the following information to the student in writing no less than 5 working days prior to the academic misconduct committee and assessment appeal panel:
 - The reason for the allegation.
 - A copy of any relevant report or other evidence.
 - The right to submit a written response and /or attend.
 - The right to accompaniment/representation.

4. Method – Academic Misconduct Committee will:

- Receive all information relevant to the case in question in advance of the meeting.
- Accept both written and verbal evidence directly from the student(s) and staff involved in the alleged offence.
- Remain impartial at all times.
- Reach an agreed decision in all cases.
- Apply the University's regulations for Academic Misconduct consistently and in an appropriate manner, giving due regard to all evidence received.
- Communicate its decisions, and penalties to be imposed, in writing to the individuals involved in each case.
- Produce an annual report of its activities for presentation to the Academic Board.

4.1. The student has the right to submit a written response.

4.2. The student has the right to be heard in person by the Panel and may be accompanied by a person of their choosing. This person may not act as a legal representative and may not speak for the student unless invited to do so. If the student does not respond or chooses not to attend then the Panel will go ahead in their absence.

4.3. In considering the allegations, the Panel may call witnesses and will not unreasonably refuse permission for staff or students to call such witnesses as they deem appropriate. The names of such witnesses should be given to the Secretary as soon as possible in order to facilitate their attendance.

4.4. A written record of the proceedings should be taken to provide supporting minutes.

4.5. The membership of the Academic Misconduct Panel will consist of:

- Chair: HE Academic Lead from another curriculum area.
- 2 HE academic leads or their nominees
- Secretary (in attendance)
- Witnesses and/or student's friend (or representative) (if applicable) (in attendance)
- The person making the allegation against the student (in attendance).

4.6. The Chair will outline the procedure to be followed and the possible outcomes of the meeting.

4.7. The person making the allegation and the student will both have the opportunity to present their case and ask questions, calling any witnesses as previously notified. Witnesses should leave the meeting once they have presented their evidence.

4.8. Decisions and penalties will be notified in writing by the HE Administration Officer

5. Possible penalties

The possible outcomes from the Academic Misconduct Committee are:

5.1. Plagiarism and collusion:

- The re-presentation of the plagiarised work, correctly referenced, for a maximum mark of 40%.
- The award of zero for the assessment in question, with the opportunity to undertake a referred assessment at the next available opportunity for a maximum mark of 40%.
- The award of zero for the work in question and no opportunity for referral.
- The loss of Honours should the offence relate to a BSc Honours dissertation or agreed equivalent research-based project.
- The loss of MA/MBA/MSc award should the offence relate to a Master's dissertation or agreed equivalent research-based project.
- Permanent exclusion from the University on the grounds of serious and/or repeated Academic Misconduct

5.2. Full details of the penalties to be applied in relation to the nature of the plagiarism offence are contained in the Plagiarism Tariff Calculator

5.3. Cheating:

- The failure of the module in question and a requirement to re-register in the following academic year and complete all module assessments.
- The failure of the academic year and a requirement to re-register for all modules in the following academic year.
- The loss of Honours should the offence relate to a BSc Honours dissertation or agreed equivalent research-based project.
- The loss of MA/MBA/MSc award should the offence relate to a Master's dissertation or agreed equivalent research-based project.
- Permanent exclusion from the University on the grounds of serious and/or repeated Academic Misconduct.

In all cases where academic misconduct is proven, a record of the offence will be placed on the student's file.

5.4. Penalty and tariff to be applied see appendices 1 and 2

6. Appeals against disciplinary decisions

6.1. A student may appeal against the outcome of a disciplinary decision, by writing to the Deputy Principal within 10 working days of the outcome decision being emailed.

6.2. Grounds for appeal

The student must be able to demonstrate one or more of the following:

- That there was a procedural irregularity within the original misconduct process.
- That the penalty imposed by the University was unreasonable or unfair.
- That new evidence has become available that was not available at the time the original offence of misconduct was considered.

7. Appeal to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator

- 7.1. Once a completion of procedures letter has been issued by the awarding body/university a student can request an independent review through the Office of the Independent Adjudicator. This must be within 12 months of the date of the completion of procedures letter.

8. Monitoring

- 8.1. HE AMG receives reports on from the academic misconduct committee in year to review any trends in the type of cases and implement additional support where there is an identified need.
- 8.2. Curriculum area annual self-evaluation reports on the number of cases from different curriculum
- 8.3. College level annual self-evaluation reports on the number and type of cases at institutional level.
- 8.4. The Curriculum and Quality Enhancement Committee receives reports on all appeals.

9. RELATED DOCUMENTS

Royal Agricultural University Academic Misconduct Procedure

UK Quality Code for Higher Education: (2018) Advice and Guidance: Assessment

Bishop Burton College Academic Appeals Procedure

Updated: January 2022

By: Deputy Principal

Appendix 1. TARIFF

Assign points based on the following criteria		
HISTORY	1st Time	100 points
	2nd Time	150 points
	3rd/+ Time	200 points
VALUE OF ASSIGNMENT	Standard weighting	30 points
	Large project (e.g. final year dissertation)	60 points
LEVEL / STAGE	Level 4	70 points
	Level 5	115 points
	Level 6/Postgraduate	140 points
AMOUNT/EXTENT	Below 5% AND less than two sentences	80 points
	As above but with critical aspects* plagiarised	105 points
	Between 5% and 20% OR more than two sentences but not more than two paragraphs	105 points
	As above but with critical aspects plagiarised	130 points
	Between 20% and 50% OR more than two paragraphs but not more than five paragraphs	130 points
	As above but with critical aspects plagiarised	160 points
	Above 50% OR more than five paragraphs	160 points
	Submission purchased from essay mill or ghost-writing service	225 points
ADDITIONAL CHARACTERISTICS	Evidence of deliberate attempt to disguise plagiarism by changing words, sentences or references to avoid detection	70 points

Appendix 2 Penalties

Penalties Summative work	
In all cases a formal warning is given and a record made contributing to the students previous history	
Points	Available penalties
280-329	No further action beyond formal warning
330-379	Assignment awarded 0% - resubmission required, with no penalty on mark
380-379	Assignment awarded 0% - resubmission required but mark capped or reduced Assignment
480-524	Assignment awarded 0% - no opportunity to resubmit
525-559	Module awarded 0% - re-sit required, but mark capped or reduced OR Module awarded 0% - no opportunity to re-sit, but credit still awarded OR Module awarded 0% - no opportunity to re-sit, and credit lost Award classification reduced
560+	Award classification reduced OR Qualification reduced (e.g. Honours -> no Honours) OR Expelled from institution but credits retained
Penalties (Formative work) or for undergraduate work submitted in Semester 1, level 1	
Award based on the points	
280-379	Informal Warning
380+	Formal warning, with record made contributing to the student's previous history