

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT POLICY – Taught Courses and MRes (2023/24)

1. Policy

The University's policy is that academic misconduct, whether deliberate or unintentional, is cheating by attempting to gain an unfair academic advantage and is unacceptable. It is expected that all students are educated in correct academic practice including writing, citing and referencing, early in their careers at the University. Students should appreciate the value of honesty, should know what is expected of them and should understand the different forms of academic misconduct and their consequences.

Definitions of Academic Misconduct

Academic misconduct includes acts of dishonesty, deception, and fraud through the attempts to gain an unfair academic advantage. The different forms of academic misconduct are defined below:

- **Plagiarism** is the act of taking or copying someone else's work and presenting it as if it were one's own. Plagiarism occurs when ideas, texts, theories, data, created artistic artefacts or other materials are presented without appropriate acknowledgement. This means that the person considering this work is given the impression they are viewing the student's own original work when it is not the case. Plagiarism can occur in various forms:
 - **Copying** – where a student actively copies the responses of another student during an exam but is presenting this as their own work
 - **Collusion** – which involves the unauthorised collaboration of students on a piece of assessment that should otherwise represent an individual effort.
 - **Personation** – which involves someone assuming the identity of a student with the intent to deceive during a piece of assessment by completing the work on behalf of the student.
 - **Contract cheating** – which involves a student engaging with and paying a third party to complete a piece of assessment on their behalf.
 - **Covert use of AI generative tools** – where AI generative tools are deployed for assessment purposes without authorisation and/or appropriate acknowledgement.
 - **Auto-plagiarism** – where a student's own previous work is re-presented without being properly referenced.

- **Cheating during exams** – where a student uses inadmissible materials or any other material during an exam, other than those approved by the invigilator. Cheating during exams will also include the act of copying and the act of collusion where students signal answers to other students during an exam or share exam content with students after an exam with the intent for them to gain an unfair advantage.
- **Falsification** or fabrication involves the unauthorised creation of false information/data, or the alteration of information/data within a piece of assessment while presenting this information as genuine.

Student declaration

The standard coursework submission sheet for the receipting of coursework includes an explicit reference to the University's definition of academic misconduct as follows.

I declare that this is all my own work. Any material I have referred to has been accurately referenced and any contribution of Artificial Intelligence technology has been fully acknowledged. I have read the University's policy on academic misconduct and understand the different forms of academic misconduct. If it is shown that material has been falsified, plagiarised, or I have otherwise attempted to obtain an unfair advantage for myself or others, I understand that I may face sanctions in accordance with the policies and procedures of the University. A mark of zero may be awarded and the reason for that mark will be recorded on my file.

[Coursework Submission Sheet](#)

The declaration of ownership is automatically generated in Blackboard Learn for e-submission of assignments. The declaration should also be used when assignments are submitted by other electronic means.

Acknowledging the use of AI Generative Tools

Where generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools have been used for an assessment, they must be acknowledged appropriately to ensure that any output is not misconstrued as the student's own work. Before beginning any piece of assessed work, students should check that the use of AI tools is authorised, as this practice may differ across modules and courses of study.

Use the links below to find out more information about citing and referencing AI in the Harvard style for your faculty.

[Citing AI Generative Tools in the Ulster Harvard Referencing style for LHS](#)

[Citing AI Generative Tools in the Ulster Harvard Referencing style for CEBE, AHSS and UUBS](#)

If using a different referencing style to Harvard, please contact your [Library Subject Team](#).

Penalties

The University's Policy provides simple, graduated Frameworks of Penalties for plagiarism relating the severity of penalties to the number of offences and gives individual, formative advice after the first offence. There are both academic and disciplinary consequences. Disciplinary penalties in taught courses and the MRes are not applied until the second offence. Offences are counted cumulatively, regardless of any change of course but do not carry over from undergraduate to postgraduate level.

The Framework of Penalties for taught programmes and the MRes follows. That for other research degrees is available from the Research Office's website.

Monitoring of Policy

The efficacy of the Policy is monitored by the Learning and Teaching Committee which receives annual reports from the Faculties and the Research Degrees Committee.

FRAMEWORK OF PENALTIES FOR PLAGIARISM OFFENCES IN TAUGHT PROGRAMMES AND MASTER OF RESEARCH

1 ST OFFENCE	2 ND OFFENCE	3 RD OFFENCE	4 TH OFFENCE	PLAGIARISM DETECTED AFTER GRADUATION
<p>Reduction in marks based on exclusion of plagiarised work.</p> <p>Formative interview with module co-ordinator and/or lecturer.</p>	<p>Mark of zero for assignment containing plagiarism.</p> <p>Interview with Head of School and/or Course/Subject Director and/or lecturer.</p> <p>Formal letter of reprimand from Head of School. Copy placed on student file.</p>	<p>Mark of zero for assignment containing plagiarism and maximum mark of 40% (UG) or 50% (PG) for coursework element¹.</p> <p>Case referred to Dean with recommendation of reprimand and fine not exceeding the maximum amount permitted under the Ordinance on Student Discipline at the time of application of penalty.</p> <p>Interview with Dean.</p> <p>Formal letter of reprimand from Dean. Copy placed on student file.</p>	<p>Mark of zero for module.</p> <p>Case referred to University Disciplinary Committee with recommendation of suspension (1 semester or 1 year as advised by Faculty) or discontinuation of studies at the University.</p> <p>Outcome recorded on student file.</p>	<p>The award may be revoked.</p>

¹ 'Assignment containing plagiarism' means the assignment which contains the plagiarised material, and not all the assessments for the module. 'Maximum mark for coursework element' refers to the total aggregate percentage mark for all the pieces of coursework in the module.

FRAMEWORK OF PENALTIES FOR PLAGIARISM OFFENCES IN RESEARCH PROGRAMMES (EXCLUDING MRes)

INITIAL ASSESSMENT (100 DAY VIVA)	CONFIRMATION ASSESSMENT	THESIS	PLAGIARISM DETECTED AFTER GRADUATION
<p>Plagiarism will generally be dealt with by a verbal warning.</p> <p>The student will be asked to resubmit the report.</p> <p>A record may be placed on the student file.</p> <p>The student may be referred to the University Disciplinary Committee.</p>	<p>The student will be required to resubmit the report for further assessment.</p> <p>The student will be interviewed by a senior member of staff (normally the Research Institute Director or the Head of the Research Graduate School).</p> <p>A record will be placed on the student file.</p> <p>The student may be referred to the University Disciplinary Committee.</p>	<p>Examiners will be asked to examine the thesis and to make an academic judgement on it, taking into account the nature and extent of the plagiarism. If the thesis is deemed worthy of the degree, it must be resubmitted with all plagiarised material eliminated.</p> <p>The student may be referred to the University Disciplinary Committee.</p> <p>Depending on the extent and nature of plagiarised material in the thesis, the examiners may recommend discontinuation of studies at the University.</p> <p>A record will be placed on the student file.</p>	<p>The award may be revoked.</p>