

Hartpury University Centre Assessment Offence Policy 2016/17

1. Academic Integrity

Every higher education student of the Institution is expected to act with integrity in relation to the production and representation of academic work and in acknowledging the contributions of others in their work.

1.2 The Institution's approach to academic integrity is to foster and facilitate good academic practice, providing practical guidance to students to help them develop learning skills that will enable them to reference their work correctly and to avoid unintentional plagiarism (see measures outlined below). Where assessed work is found to display poor levels of scholarship, advice and support will be offered.

1.3 However the institution expects students to take care to follow the appropriate conventions and standards for academic practice in their subject discipline as may be defined in assignment briefs and other guidance provided by academic staff. Work that does not meet appropriate or acceptable standards of academic practice in this respect may leave the student open to action under the academic regulations and policies of the Institution relating to assessment offences.

2. Assessment Offences

2.1 The Institution takes the investigation of all alleged assessment offences seriously. It is an assessment offence for a candidate to commit any act designed to obtain an unfair advantage with a view to achieving a higher grade or mark than they would otherwise secure. Behaviour that constitutes an assessment offence in the context of this policy statement include but is not limited to:

Plagiarism

Is considered as passing off someone else's work (intentionally or unintentionally) as your own, for your own benefit (Carrol, 2002)

Collusion

Involves knowingly working together to produce work due to be assessed, in circumstances where this is forbidden (Barrett & Cox, 2005)

Further examples of plagiarism and/or collusion are illustrate in Appendix A.

2.2 The range of penalties that may be imposed where cases are proven are shown in Appendix B. Students found to have committed an assessment offence may also be required to undertake supplementary academic integrity training to help them improve their academic practice in addition to any other penalty that may be imposed by the Institution.

3. Responsibilities of the Institution

3.1 The Institution will foster good academic practice and support student learning by:

- Ensuring that students are provided with appropriate information about plagiarism and other assessment offences and how to avoid committing them available via the Hartpury Advantage Diary, published on the College website with on-line information and policies, and other appropriate sources for example the VLE and assessment briefs;

ii) Promote good learning, teaching and assessment practices to minimise the occurrence of plagiarism e.g. in 'designing out' plagiarism in the development of new programmes, learning outcomes and assessment methods;

iii) Raising awareness of assessment offences during taught sessions;

iv) Provide opportunities for academic integrity and skills training for students e.g. Achievement & Success Centre workshops and online resources which will include material on identifying and avoiding plagiarism and on the referencing and citation conventions appropriate to their subject discipline, as well as avoiding other assessment offences;

v) Appoint an Assessment Offences Officer who will:

- Provide advice to staff members where cases of plagiarism or other assessment offences are suspected, facilitating the identification of instances of poor scholarship which will not proceed to the assessment offence investigation process;
- Oversee arrangements for providing guidance, support and/or further training to students instances of poor scholarship;
- Compile information and evidence about specific alleged assessment offences to facilitate investigation by the Associate Dean Quality and Standards (or nominee)
- Provide informal advice about the implications and possible outcomes of the process of academic procedures to students accused of plagiarism and other assessment offences and provide details of any other sources of support or counselling available to them e.g. the Students Union;
- Take an active role to identify and promote good practice and staff development in relation to the detection and deterrence of plagiarism and other assessment offences including the use of text-matching/ detection software;
- Identify emerging issues and trends in assessment offence monitoring data and promulgate suitable actions arising from them;

vi) Investigating all suspected assessment offences thoroughly, following the investigative process, and ensuring that the interests of any student alleged to have omitted an assessment offence are reasonably and fairly taken into account;

vii) Monitoring the incidence of assessment offences throughout the Institution on an annual basis and using this to inform the development of learning, teaching and assessment strategies and practice.

4. Responsibilities of the Student

4.1 Students are expected to:

i) Undertake assessment and submit assignments in accordance with the academic regulations, this policy and other institutional policies;

ii) Be responsible for their own work, avoid plagiarism and other assessment offences, and not knowingly allow others to commit plagiarism or collusion by copying/using their work in breach of academic regulations and procedures;

iii) Avail themselves of the information and training opportunities provided that are aimed at developing their understanding of academic practices and skills such as referencing, citation, paraphrasing and compiling a bibliography.

References

Barrett, R. and Cox, A, L. (2005) At least they're learning something: the hazy line between collaboration and collusion. *Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education*. 30(2), pp. 107-122

Carroll, J. (2002) *A Handbook for deterring plagiarism in Higher education*. 2nd ed. Oxford Brookes University: Oxford Centre for Staff and Learning Development.

Fishman, T. (2011) Integrity and incongruity in an increasingly integrated world. Presentation at the fifth one-day event on Institutional Policies and Procedures for Managing Student Plagiarism, Oxford Brookes University, Oxford, 9 June 2011.

FINAL DRAFT

APPENDIX A

Examples of unacceptable academic practice with regard to plagiarism, collusion and other assessment offences

1. Plagiarism

When someone uses words, ideas, or work products that are attributable to another identifiable person or source without attributing the work to the source from which it was obtained.

In a situation where there is a legitimate expectation of original authorship.

In order to obtain some benefit, credit, or gain.

(Fishman, 2011)

- Copying more than a single phrase from another person's work without the use of quotation marks or acknowledgement of the sources;
- Summarizing another person's work by simply changing a few words or altering the order of presentation without acknowledgement;
- Paraphrasing material from a source without acknowledging the original author;
- Using someone else's ideas without acknowledgement of the source or by pretending they are your own;
- Copying another student's work with or without their knowledge or agreement (this may also be deemed as collusion);
- Downloading material from the web and submitting it as your own work;
- Using course notes without referencing;
- Self-plagiarism – students may not re-use work (or a substantial part of it) that has previously been submitted for a different assessment for which credit has been awarded.

2. Collusion

- Submitting as your own work, assessment that was completed in collaboration with another person(s), with intention to gain unfair advantage;
- Collaborating with another person in the completion of work which is intended to be submitted as that other person's own unaided work;
- Knowingly permitting another person to copy all or part of your work and submit it as their own unaided work.

NB This is not an exhaustive list

3. Contract Cheating

- Submitting your own, work which has been produced in whole or part by another person on your behalf, e.g. by using a 'ghost writing' service, essay mill, or similar.
- Deliberately making available, or seeking to make available, material to another student (of this university or elsewhere) whether in exchange for financial gain or otherwise with the intention that the material is used by the other student to engage in unacceptable academic practice/assessment offences.

4. Falsification

- Falsifying or misrepresenting the results of experimental/research data;
- Falsifying references, bibliography or laboratory reports or projects by claiming they are a result of your own work.

5. Fabrication

Reporting on experiments/research never performed or data never collected.

6. Cheating or Intent to Cheat

- Found with notes in an examination
- Retaining mobile phone, smartphone or similar device within an examination

NB This is not an exhaustive list

Appendix B – Assessment Offences Penalties guidance

Summary of applicable penalties for proven assessment offence cases at undergraduate and postgraduate taught level.

Offence deemed	Offence committed	Normal penalty to be applied
Poor academic practice	Poor Scholarship	Meeting with assessment officer and a 'technical offence' is noted on ISIS – no penalty – check mark given has taken account of poor scholarship
First and lesser offence (less than 25% of the material plagiarised)	Evidence shows plagiarism, cheating or collusion	Assessment (element) capped at 40 for undergraduate/50 for postgraduate)
Second lesser offence (less than 25% of material plagiarised), or; First serious offence (25-80% of material plagiarised)	Evidence shows plagiarism, cheating or collusion	Assessment (element) reduced to 0 module and referred in component
Second/Subsequent offence (25-80% material plagiarised) or severe (see guidance below)	Evidence shows plagiarism, cheating or collusion	Assessment (component) reduced to 0 and referred in component Additionally for severe offences, no re-sit opportunities or further attempts

Alleged assessment offences identified in assignments which were submitted in parallel will normally be processed as one assessment offence.

Guidance to inform a severe offence outcome

Key issues which should be considered when deciding an appropriate penalty for a serious offence are;

- Intent to deceive
- Volume of plagiarism detected i.e. more than 80% of material plagiarised
- Size of assessment e.g. final year project dissertation or standard assignment weighting
- Level of module e.g. level 3/M and the amount of previous study skill support having been undertaken

Aggravating factors include, but are not limited to, behaviour such as accusing another innocent student of complicity or other involvement. These factors should be taken into account when deciding on an appropriate penalty.