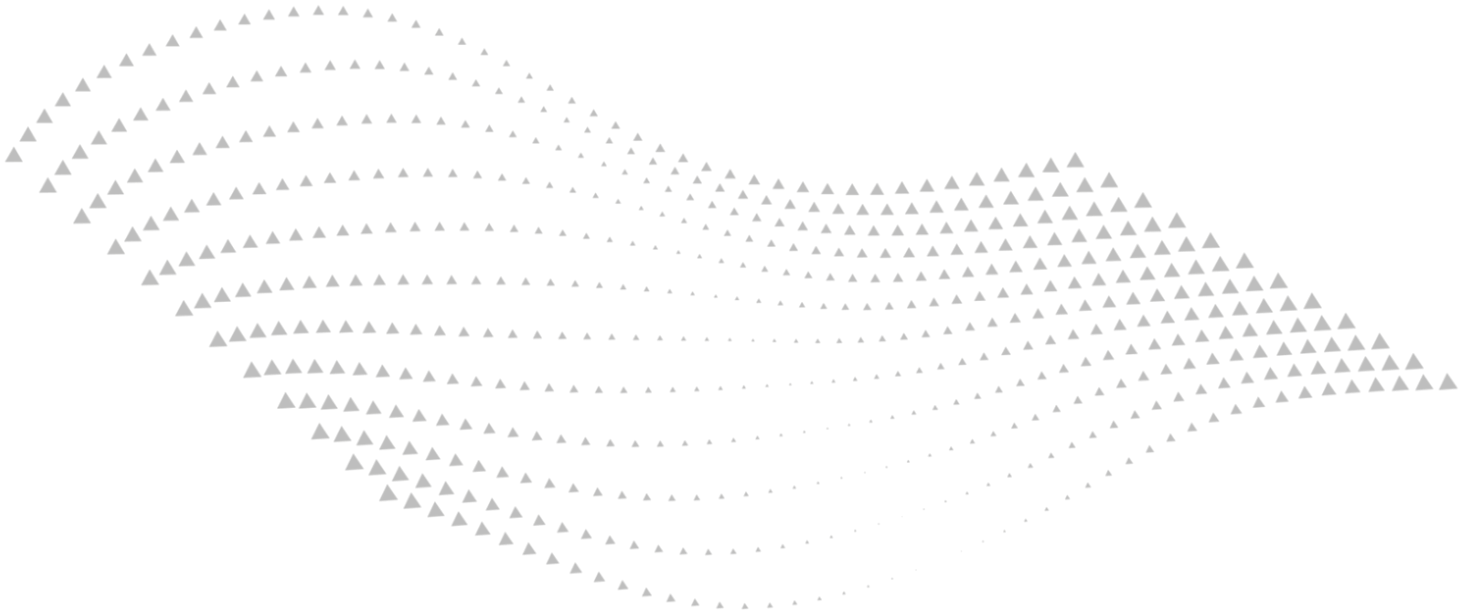
BIMM UNIVERSITY | A university for the creative industries

Academic Integrity Policy



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Academic Integrity Policy

What is Academic Integrity?

- **Accuracy** – making sure that your work is free from errors.
- **Honesty** – being truthful about which ideas are your own and which are derived from others, and about the methods and results of your research.
- **Fairness** – not trying to gain an advantage by unfair means, such as passing off others' work as your own.
- **Responsibility** – taking an active role in your learning: for instance, by seeking out the information you need to study effectively.
- **Respect** – for your fellow students, your lecturers, and the work of other scholars.
- **Courage** – we should all feel able to act according to our own convictions, make choices, and learn from them.[1]

Our Approach to Academic Integrity

BIMM University has adopted the Quality Assurance Agency's Academic Integrity Charter for UK Higher Education.[2] The Charter sets out the following principles:

This Charter represents the collective commitment of the UK higher education sector to promote academic integrity and take action against academic misconduct.

Students who commit academic misconduct, especially if they deliberately cheat, risk their academic and future careers. The implications, however, go far wider than higher education. It is a societal issue. Graduates could enter the workforce without the necessary skills, knowledge and competency, with potential public health and safety implications.

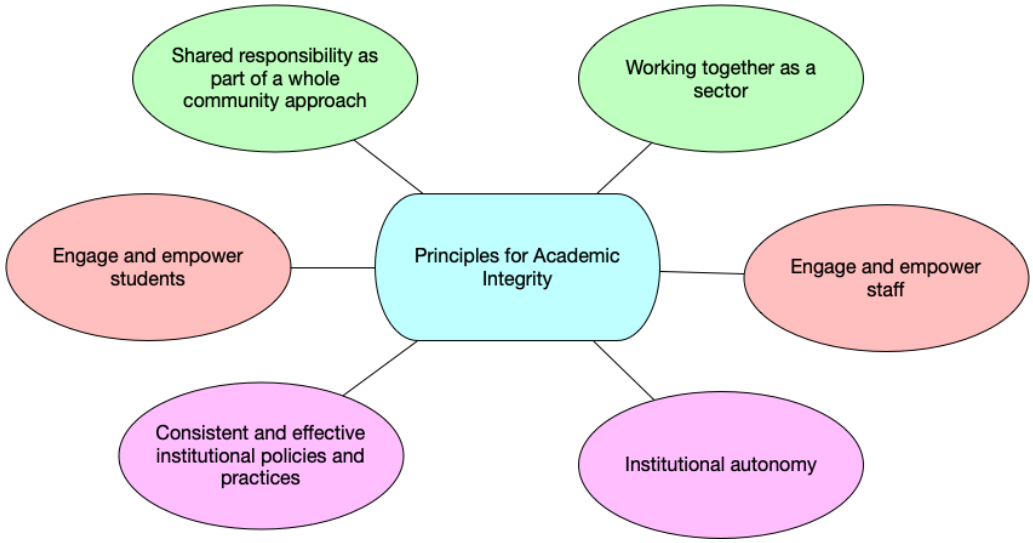

Fig. 1 Principles of Academic Integrity

[1] Adapted from International Center for Academic Integrity https://academicintegrity.org/images/pdfs/20019_ICAI-Fundamental-Values_R12.pdf

[2] https://www.qaa.ac.uk/about-us/what-we-do/academic-integrity/charter

A Whole Community Approach

We believe that all members of our academic community are responsible for upholding academic integrity. However, we understand that our students may make mistakes. Our approach should recognise this and not penalise it, while remaining clear that deliberate academic misconduct is cheating and unacceptable.

We take a holistic approach to academic integrity by promoting trust and confidence in your understanding of the standards we expect, thereby minimising academic misconduct.

Our pledge to you is to offer guidance and support at every level of study, informing you of our expectations and academic assessment requirements. We will also take a consistent institution-wide approach to detecting and reporting misconduct and ensure our staff are trained and supported to make reliable and reasonable judgements in cases of academic misconduct.

Academic Leadership

Deans of Faculty/Director of Postgraduate Studies will oversee how academic integrity is upheld across their faculty. In addition, Heads of School will be responsible for ensuring that Course Leaders and teaching teams are aware of this policy and incorporate it into teaching, learning and assessment.

Working with the Higher Education Sector

We are committed to learning from best practices across the sector, both nationally and internationally.

Empower and Engage our Students

We are devoted to supporting you in your learning. Therefore, a clear understanding of academic integrity is a critical component of the competencies you will develop while you study with us.

You are responsible for the integrity of your learning and choices, including any decision to break the rules. However, we will work with you at every study level to understand our values and expectations. Moreover, our staff will model best practices in academic integrity in their teaching and research and the material they share with you to support your learning.

Empower and Support our Faculty

Our faculty are at the frontline of academic integrity. They will identify and assess any breaches of the principles we adhere to. We will provide our academic and administrative staff with training and support to fulfil this essential role with rigour, fairness, and compassion. We will also support our academic teams in developing and enhancing the curriculum and assessment so that academic integrity is 'baked in.'

Consistent and Effective Policies and Practices

The development of this policy is a first step in embedding this principle, and, in addition, we commit to:

- Focus on educative and preventive measures and activities.
- Provide clear terms and definitions that distinguish among different types of academic misconduct, with examples that our students can understand.
- Establish with transparency the level of penalties or developmental support applicable and proportionate to different types of academic misconduct

- Have transparent, easy-to-follow and fair processes for investigating and assessing possible cases.
- Periodically review our policy and processes, and their alignment with the Charter's principles.

Institutional Autonomy

We are an autonomous university with Degree Awarding Powers. As such, we are responsible for promoting and maintaining the quality and integrity of our provision and securing the academic standards of the awards we offer. Furthermore, we are dedicated to ensuring that our approach to academic integrity is fit for purpose within the context of the subject areas in which we are experts, namely the performing arts and creative industries.

Academic Misconduct

BIMM University believes it is essential that you are judged on your ability, as demonstrated by the work you produce and submit for assessment. Therefore, all assessments you submit should be your work, except for assessments where collaboration is allowed or required. Academic misconduct is any activity that gives a student an unfair academic advantage over others. The following are examples of types of academic misconduct that may occur – providing examples to aid your understanding of this policy should not be considered a complete list.

Plagiarism: Submitting the work or ideas of someone else as your own without appropriate referencing. Examples of plagiarism include:

- Copying sections from one or more books/articles without acknowledging the source.
- Copying from other members while working in a group.
- Submitting the work of others as your own, including students and former students.
- Plagiarism in performances and presentations: references must be submitted in Harvard format, citing any cover songs performed, music and media samples or clips used, and sources referred to in the assessment.
- Using the work of others without acknowledgement for practical submissions, such as using music samples, film and media clips or submitting compositions that have been co-written or co-produced without attribution (referencing).
- Using Artificial Intelligence (AI) applications to create work or elements of work without fully attributing their use.

Duplication: Submitting your previously assessed work from another course/module. There are exceptions to this where you may draw on specific elements of prior work, which will be detailed in the assessment brief. Other situations in which duplication is permitted are:

- Where you are undertaking a Repeat Year, you may resubmit part of a piece of work or the entire work on a module you are repeating, provided that the work has not been submitted for and achieved credit on another module. In such cases, you must declare in writing on the cover page that the work has previously been submitted to the university. You should also know that a different mark may be awarded for the repeat submission.
- Work submitted previously may be used as an element of a dissertation or final-year project, provided it does not comprise more than 20% of the total volume and is appropriately referenced or used in appendices or supplementary materials.
- At postgraduate level, you may, if required, submit a portfolio including the final project

or dissertation and work previously submitted for credit only.

Impersonation: Submitting work prepared by another person for assessment purposes:

- Purchasing essays from essay mills or others, including other students or ex-students.
- Production of work for another student to submit as their own.
- Asking someone else to sit an exam or practical assessment for you, or sitting an exam or assessment for a fellow student.

Collusion: Failure to work independently where required and passing the work off as solely your own. This differs from collaboration; some assignments may specify that you should collaborate, and these collaborative work requirements will be detailed in the assessment brief and the submission portal. You must make it clear whenever you work collaboratively and name all those who collaborated to produce the work you submit for assessment.

Falsification: Submitting assessed work which has been either fabricated or falsified. Examples include:

- Submitting data or observations in assessed work that have been fabricated or falsified.
- Submitting written work with hidden text to increase the word count.
- Submitting a video recording of a performance for assessment where miming, editing, or manipulating the file is evident.

Permissible Proofreading and Editing Assistance

You can access support in reviewing drafts of work you are preparing for submission for summative assessment as long as that support aligns with the guidance provided in the Study Skills Hub.

Using digital tools including AI to help you with things like editing and refining your writing (spelling, grammar, syntax, and clarity) is permissible and does not require attribution. The Study Skills Hub guidance clarifies that you should 'use AI to support and assist – not replace – your own voice and ideas. Where you have used AI in an assessment, you must ensure that the work still demonstrates evidence that you have used your own skills, knowledge and learning in accordance with the module's Assessed Learning Outcomes.' However, where AI is used to create content that forms part of an assessment this must be attributed as detailed above in the section on plagiarism.

If the guidance is unclear to you, please seek advice from your Course Leader or Deputy Course Leader.

Where academic staff suspect unfair academic misconduct, they may raise their concerns using the following procedure.

Suspected Academic Misconduct Procedure

Where it is suspected that a student has committed misconduct in the preparation and/or presentation of their work, it should still be marked, excluding any suspect sections. The marker should take steps to identify and highlight all instances of potential misconduct in the assessment in keeping with the guidelines below and refer the case to the Student's Course Leader.

The following sections define the actions that will follow a finding of academic misconduct. The decisions made using this procedure are matters of academic judgment by experts in the subject who will strive to make fair, reasonable and compassionate judgments based on available evidence and the balance of probabilities.

Poor Academic Practice (PAP)

Where the Course Leader, or authorised nominee, determines that the issue is one of an unintentional or genuine mistake or misunderstanding of the expectations set by BIMM University, the following course of action shall apply:

a. First, the work will be marked, and the marker will note the examples of poor academic practice in the feedback.

b. The student will be invited to attend an Academic Good Practice Tutorial, during which they will discuss the issues raised by the marker regarding their work and receive support and guidance on academic integrity.

c. If the student does not attend the tutorial, a note will be made in their student record for the duration of their course.

d. If a student has a second instance of poor academic practice during their course, they will be required to attend an Academic Good Practice Tutorial, where they will discuss the issues raised by the marker regarding their work and receive support and guidance on academic integrity.

e. Following the Academic Good Practice Tutorial, a PAP notice will be issued to the student and will remain in their record for the duration of their course.

f. Any further instances of PAP will automatically trigger a minor academic misconduct process.

g. Poor Academic Practice cases will typically be concluded within ten working days of the receipt of the case. They will be dealt with internally by the Course Leader or authorised nominee within the School.

h. Course leaders will maintain a record of PAP cases to identify patterns and take action to ensure students receive effective guidance on academic integrity.

Suspected Minor Academic Misconduct

A student suspected of committing minor academic misconduct by their Course Leader shall be invited to attend a compulsory interview and shall be given copies of all evidence submitted supporting the suspected misconduct case:

a. Notice of five working days will be given to the student of the interview date and time. All academic misconduct notification emails will include a short, plain-English summary clearly stating the nature of the suspected misconduct, the specific behaviour under investigation, and how this maps to this academic integrity policy.

a. Students may be accompanied by a friend or other representative to the interview, including a student representative or student association officer. A staff member not involved in the investigation will also attend to make a detailed record of the meeting, which will form part of the evidence to be considered.

b. If a student cannot make the original proposed date, they should contact the Course Leader or authorised nominee within two working days of notification of the case to make alternative arrangements for the interview.

c. Where a student fails to attend or make alternative arrangements, the process should proceed, and consideration should be given to the available evidence.

d. The student will be asked to raise any mitigating circumstances relevant to the case, and the Course Leader will consider them when deciding the outcome.

e. Where minor academic misconduct is proven, the Course Leader will ensure that one of the actions in the Penalties Table is applied and will notify the student of the outcome in writing within five working days of the interview.

f. Where no misconduct is proven, the case will be dismissed, and no penalties will be applied.

g. If the case warrants it, a student may be tested on subject knowledge by an oral examination as part of an interview. An academic staff member with subject-matter knowledge shall conduct the oral exam.

h. All minor academic misconduct cases referred to the Course Leader or an authorised nominee will typically be concluded within 20 working days of receipt and dealt with internally by the School. In addition, BIMM University will log instances of poor academic practice and minor misconduct, and anonymised data will be shared with senior staff as part of our quality assurance process.

i. If the Course Leader, or authorised nominee, determines, following the interview, that there is evidence of academic misconduct in an assessment that cannot be dealt with as minor academic misconduct and may be major or gross. The case will be referred to the Head of School or authorised nominee within five working days.

j. Course leaders will maintain a record of minor misconduct cases to identify patterns and take action to ensure students receive effective guidance on academic integrity.

Suspected Major or Gross Academic Misconduct

Any student(s) suspected of committing major or gross academic misconduct shall be invited to attend a compulsory interview with the Head of School or authorised nominee and shall be given copies of all evidence submitted supporting the case. The interview shall be conducted in the company of an independent third party to take minutes of the meeting, which will then form part of the evidence to be considered:

a. Notice of five working days will be given to the student (s) of the interview date and time. All academic misconduct notification emails will include a short, plain-English summary clearly stating the nature of the suspected misconduct, the specific behaviour under investigation, and how this maps to this academic integrity policy.

b. Student(s) may be accompanied to the interview by a friend or other representative, including a student representative or student society officer. Under normal circumstances, it should not be necessary for the student to have legal representation. However, if a case is complex and the potential consequences are serious for the student, legal representation may be appropriate, and students should inform the university that they will be accompanied to the interview by their legal representative. A staff member not involved in the investigation will also attend to make a

detailed record of the meeting, which will form part of the evidence to be considered.

c. If a student cannot make the original proposed date, they should contact the Head of School or authorised nominee within two working days of notification of the case to make alternative arrangements for the interview.

d. Where a student fails to attend or make alternative arrangements, the investigation should proceed, and consideration should be given to the available evidence.

e. The student will be asked to raise any mitigating circumstances relevant to the case, and this will be considered by the Head of School or nominee when making their decision on the outcome.

f. After the interview, the Head of School shall submit the minutes of the discussion and all the evidence to the Dean of Faculty/Director of Postgraduate Studies or designate.

g. As part of an interview, if the case warrants it, the student(s) may be tested on subject knowledge through an oral examination. An academic staff member with subject-matter expertise shall conduct the oral exam.

h. The Head of School or designate will convene an Academic Misconduct Panel to consider the evidence and determine whether academic misconduct has occurred and what action should be taken. The Panel will normally consist of the Head of School, a Head of School from another faculty and a member of Academic Services.

i. If it is determined that major academic misconduct has been committed, the student's record will be made available to the Panel, along with their transcript. In arriving at a decision on penalties to be applied, the Panel will consider any previous academic misconduct on record and shall impose the penalties individually. Each individual will be considered separately in cases involving a group of students.

j. Where no misconduct is proven, the case will be dismissed, and no penalties will be applied.

k. If evidence of further academic misconduct is revealed during the investigation, the penalties will apply to those affected.

l. The Academic Misconduct Panel shall impose a formal record to be retained in the student's file for the duration of their course of study. In addition, one of the actions outlined in the Penalties Table shall be applied for each module for which academic misconduct is found to have been committed.

m. On completion of the Academic Misconduct Panel investigation, the minute taker shall notify the student in writing of the case's outcome.

n. All major or gross academic misconduct cases will typically be concluded within 20 working days of the receipt of the case referral from the Course Leader. Therefore, the total time to complete a major or gross academic misconduct case is normally 25 working days.

o. BIMM University will maintain a record of major misconduct cases to identify patterns and take action to ensure students receive effective guidance on academic integrity.



Fig. 2 Academic Misconduct Flowchart.

Examples of Academic Misconduct in Each Category:

Poor Academic Practice

- Sources are inconsistently referenced, and citations are formatted incorrectly.
- Mistakes in referencing, such as the omission of quotation marks.
- A few sentences were directly copied without acknowledging the source.
- There are a few instances of inappropriate or unacknowledged paraphrasing.

Minor Academic Misconduct

- Repeated poor academic practice.
- Several paragraphs of direct copying without acknowledging the source.
- Several sections of unacknowledged paraphrasing of another person's ideas or text.
- Limited use of AI beyond that permitted by the third-party proofreading and editing guidelines provided in the Study Skills Hub.
- Minimal use of AI to generate content without acknowledging the source.
- Submission of a creative artefact for more than one assessment with minimal repurposing and or clarity in attribution, where this is allowed.

Major Academic Misconduct

- Large sections of unacknowledged paraphrasing of another person's ideas or text.
- Submission of a creative artefact for more than one assessment where this is not allowed.
- Submission of a creative artefact for more than one assessment without repurposing and clear attribution.
- Presenting the work of other participants without acknowledgement.
- Presenting work that has been processed through AI applications beyond that permitted by the third-party proofreading and editing guidelines referenced above.
- Failing to attribute the use of AI applications in generating elements of audio-visual content.
- Presenting the work of commercial or industry practitioners without acknowledgement.
- Deliberate falsifying of data or using another person's work without permission.
- Deliberately submitting the same piece of work for more than one assignment.
- Conspiring or colluding with others to commit any of the above.
- Second Minor Misconduct.

Gross Academic Misconduct

- Submitting an assignment purchased or downloaded from the internet.
- Deliberately presenting outputs from AI applications as your work (false authorship).
- Commissioning another person to produce a work, including presentations and performances.
- Theft of other participants' work.
- Theft of the work of commercial or industry practitioners.
- Copyright Theft.
- Fraud, including impersonation and misrepresentation of identity.
- Conspiring or colluding with others to commit any of the above.
- Second Major Misconduct.

Academic Misconduct Penalties Table[3]

Category	Action	Module Cap	Maximum credit awarded for module	Recorded on the transcript	Right to appropriate exit award	Level
0	**None** There is no case to answer.	None	N/A	N/A	N/A	**None**
1	**Guidance** 1st instance tutorial offered. 2nd Instance compulsory tutorial. 3rd instance triggers the minor misconduct process.	None	Maximum Available	No	N/A	**Poor Academic Practice**
2	**Fail assessment** with a right to a Retrieval for a capped mark where module failed.*	None	Maximum Available	No	N/A	**Minor Academic Misconduct**
3	**Fail assessment** with a right to a Retrieval where module failed.*	Pass Mark	Maximum Available	Yes	N/A	**Minor Academic Misconduct** **Major Academic Misconduct**
4	**Fail module** (all assessment marks removed) with a right to a Retrieval Assessment Mode.*	Pass Mark	Maximum Available	Yes	N/A	**Major Academic Misconduct**
5	**Fail Module** (all assessment marks removed) with a right to a Retrieval Assessment Mode.*	0	Maximum Available	Yes	Yes	**Major Academic Misconduct** **Gross Academic Misconduct**
6	**Fail Module** (all assessment marks removed)no right to retrieve credit.	0	0	Yes	Yes	**Gross Academic Misconduct**
7	**Fail Course** no right to retrieve credit or progress.	0	0	Yes	Yes	**Gross Academic Misconduct**
8	**Fail Course** no right to retrieve credit or progress.	0	0	Yes	No	**Gross Academic Misconduct**

In the case of an academic misconduct penalty requiring resubmission for assessment, the resubmission must take place at the earliest available opportunity during the current academic year

[3] Penalties are only applied where a case is proven.
***There is no right to Retrieval where misconduct is proven for a retrieval assessment (normal assessment regulations apply).**

and by the deadline set by the Head of School. Where a student does not resubmit, the original mark awarded will stand.

Appeals Against Decisions on Academic Misconduct

Students have the right to appeal against decisions concerning academic misconduct on the following grounds:

- You experienced circumstances that affected your assessment, but there was a good reason why the Assessment Board was not aware of them when it made its decision. For example, this may include illness, bereavement, or other serious personal circumstances that could not reasonably have been reported earlier.
- There is evidence that the correct procedures were not followed, and this may have affected the outcome of the decision. This could include administrative errors, failure to follow University regulations, or other mistakes in the assessment process.
- There is evidence that bias, prejudice, or unfair treatment may have influenced the marking process, moderation process, or Assessment Board's decision.

Appeals against academic misconduct decisions are considered in the same way as an academic appeal, under the Student Appeals Procedure. This procedure sets out the appeals process, deadlines, evidence requirements, review stage, and your right to seek an independent review by the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) once the University's procedures have been completed.