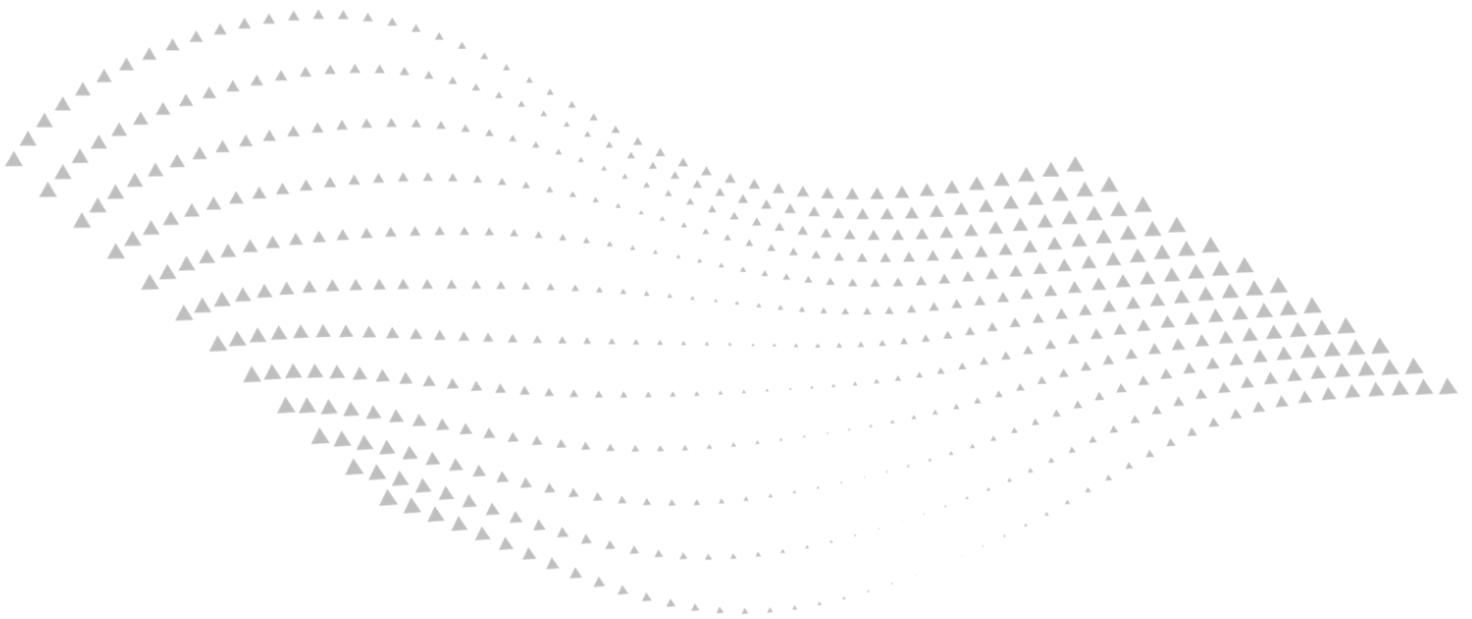


BIMM
UNIVERSITY

A university
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FE Academic Misconduct Policy & Procedure



Last approved: September 2020

Approved by: Academic Board

Next review due: September 2024

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This Policy & Procedure applies to all students registered on an FE course at BIMM University.
- 1.2. The University believes it is important that all students are judged on their own ability and that all assessments submitted should be original. Academic Misconduct is defined as any activity used by a student which provides them with an unfair academic advantage over others. In cases where Academic Misconduct is suspected, the University will follow the procedures outlined below.
- 1.3. Under this Policy, it is an offence for any student to be guilty of, or party to, attempting to commit or committing collusion, plagiarism, or any other type of academic misconduct in an examination or in the preparation of work that is submitted for assessment.
- 1.4. Misconduct in assessment exercises, examinations or in the presentation of marks achieved elsewhere is conduct likely to be prejudicial to the integrity and fairness of the examination process. The submission of coursework will be considered by the University to be a declaration that it is the student's own work.
- 1.5. Students should be aware that an Academic Misconduct case can be opened at any time, even if they have completed their course and are no longer a current student.

2. Collusion

- 2.1. Collusion is the preparation or production of work for assessment jointly with another person or persons unless explicitly permitted by the Assignment Brief. An act of collusion is understood to encompass those who actively assist others as well as those who derive benefit from others' work. Where joint preparation, is permitted by the Assignment Brief but joint production is not, the submitted work must be produced solely by the candidate making the submission.
- 2.2. Where joint production or joint preparation and production of work for assessment is specifically permitted, this will be published in the appropriate course documentation. Assignment Briefs are clearly marked as individual or group work, and students should consult their lecturer or Course Leader if they are unsure about group or individual assignments.

3. Plagiarism

- 3.1. Plagiarism is the use, without acknowledgement, of the intellectual work of others, and the presenting as new and original an idea or product derived from an existing source in work submitted for assessment.
- 3.2. To copy sentences, phrases or even striking expressions without acknowledgement of the source (either by inadequate citation or failure to indicate verbatim quotations), is plagiarism; to paraphrase without acknowledgement is, likewise, plagiarism.
- 3.3. Where such copying or paraphrase has occurred the mere mention of the source in the bibliography shall not be deemed sufficient acknowledgement; each such instance must be referred specifically to its source. Verbatim quotations must be either in inverted commas, or indented, and directly acknowledged.

4. Personation

- 4.1. Personation is where someone other than the student prepares the work submitted for assessment. This includes purchasing essays from essay banks, commissioning someone else to write an assessment or asking someone else to sit an examination.
- 4.2. Students who attend an assessment without their student ID-card, or other acceptable form of photo-ID, may not have their assessment marked until their identity has been confirmed.
- 4.3. The University takes personation extremely seriously and any suspicion of personation will be treated as a major or gross offence and will result in an investigation of potential academic misconduct.

5. Assessment Misconduct

- 5.1. Misconduct in unseen assessments includes having access, or attempting to gain access, during an assessment, to any books, memoranda, notes, unauthorised calculators, or any other material, except such as may have been supplied by the Assessor or authorised by the University.
- 5.2. It also includes aiding or attempting to aid another student, obtaining or attempting to obtain aid from another student, or any other communication not sanctioned within the Assignment Brief.

6. Falsification

- 6.1. Submitting data or observations in assessed work which has been either fabricated or falsified.

7. Non-Contributory Work

- 7.1. In the case of non-contributory work, which contains material that would otherwise be subject to misconduct procedures were the work to be contributory, and such potential misconduct is identified, students should be referred to the published guidance on avoiding plagiarism and may receive advice as to future conduct.
- 7.2. A 'notice of advice', which should include an indication of the guidance provided, may be held on the student's file. The student will be notified if such a notice is retained. The notice of advice may be used only to establish that appropriate guidance has been provided and may not be used to establish the extent of guilt should subsequent cases arise.

8. Severity of Academic Misconduct

- 8.1. Academic Misconduct shall be dealt with according to the severity of the offence as follows:

Minor Offence – examples of which include:

- Reproducing an existing concept or idea unintentionally;
- Several sentences of direct copying without acknowledging the source;
- Several instances of inappropriate or unacknowledged paraphrasing;

Major Offence – examples of which include:

- Several paragraphs of direct copying without acknowledging the source;
- Large sections of unacknowledged paraphrasing of another person's ideas or text;
- Presentation of the work of other students without acknowledgement;
- Presentation of the work of commercial or industry practitioners without acknowledgement;
- Deliberate falsifying of data or using another person's work without permission;
- An assignment that has been translated into English by another person;
- An assignment that has been edited by another person;
- Collusion;
- 2nd Minor Offence;
- Conspiring or colluding with others to commit any of the above.

Gross Offence – examples of which include:

- Submitting an assignment purchased or downloaded from the internet;
- Commissioning another person to produce a piece of work;
- Theft of the work of other students;
- 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;
- 2nd Major Offence, particularly if the student has been previously reprimanded.

- 8.2. In the case of a proven academic offence with a penalty requiring the resubmission of assessment, the resubmission must take place at the earliest available re-sit opportunity during the current academic year and by the deadline set by the College. Where a student does not resubmit, the original mark awarded shall stand.

9. Procedures for Determining Allegations of Academic Misconduct

- 9.1. Where it is suspected that a student has committed misconduct in the preparation and/or presentation of their work, the Assessor should take appropriate steps to identify all instances of misconduct in the assessment in keeping with the guidelines below and refer the case to the student's Course Leader.
- 9.2. Where the allegation is plagiarism, the Assessor should mark the work taking the plagiarism into account. If a piece of work is plagiarised, in whole or in part, the mark should be reduced in proportion to the extent of the plagiarism identified. Non-plagiarised sections should be marked as standard. Therefore, the final mark should reflect a combination of the extent of the plagiarised passages, and the quality of the non-plagiarised work; it may or may not be a fail mark.
- 9.3. Where the allegation is collusion, the process for a Major Offence should be followed, and the students accused of collusion should be invited to separate interviews.
- 9.4. Where the allegation is another form of misconduct, the assessment should be given a mark which reflects the Assessor's opinion of the work, as far as possible with the suspicion of misconduct set aside, i.e. award a mark that reflects the quality of the work as it stands. The marked-up original should be sent to the Course Leader.

10. Poor Academic Practice

- 10.1. Poor Academic Practice is defined as where a first academic offence has been committed due to lack of knowledge of academic writing.
- 10.2. Where the Course Leader, or authorised nominee, determines that the first offence is due to poor academic practice, the following course of action shall apply:
- a) the work will be marked excluding the offending sections;
 - b) the student will be required to attend a compulsory Academic Good Practice Tutorial, at which they will obtain further support and guidance in referencing skills and, should the mark awarded constitute a fail, they will be given a new deadline to resubmit their work for an unpenalised mark;
 - c) a warning letter will be issued to and retained on the student's file for a period of one year.
- 10.3. Poor Academic Practice cases will normally be concluded within 10 working days of the receipt of the case and will be managed by the Course Leader, or authorised nominee within the College.
- 10.4. Where a student commits a further offence of the same nature, it should be considered as a Minor Offence or a Major Offence, depending on the level of severity.

11. Minor Offence

- 11.1. A student suspected of committing a Minor Academic Offence shall be invited to attend a compulsory interview with the Course Leader, or authorised nominee, and shall be given copies of all evidence submitted in support of the allegation. 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.
- 11.2. As part of an interview, if the case warrants it, a student may be tested on subject knowledge by an oral examination. The oral examination shall be conducted by a member of academic staff with knowledge of the subject.
- 11.3. Notice of five working days will be given to the student of the interview date and time.
- 11.4. A student may be accompanied to the interview by a friend or other representative. Under no circumstances may the student have legal representation or be represented by an external

organisation. An independent third-party will also attend to make a detailed record of the meeting, which will then form part of the evidence to be considered.

- 11.5. Students should contact the Course Leader, or authorised nominee, within two working days of notification of the allegation to make alternative arrangements for the interview if they are unable to make the original proposed date.
- 11.6. Where a student fails to attend or make alternative arrangements, the investigation should proceed, and consideration should be given to the evidence available, and the student's failure to take the opportunity to present a defence may be a factor in the outcome reached.
- 11.7. Where a Minor Offence is proven, the Course Leader will ensure that one of the actions outlined in Section 13 is applied and will notify the student of the outcome in writing within five working days of the interview date.
- 11.8. All Minor Offence cases referred to the Course Leader, or authorised nominee, will normally be concluded within 20 working days of receipt of the case by the College.
- 11.9. Where the Course Leader, or authorised nominee, determines following the interview that there is evidence of an academic offence in an assessment that cannot be dealt with as a Minor Offence, the case will be referred as a Major Offence within five working days to the FE Centre Manager/Head of Education/Head of Learning & Teaching.
- 11.10. All Minor Offence cases will be referred to the relevant Awarding Body for review. If an academic offence is revealed, any student(s) concerned may be subject to further penalties as per Awarding Organisation policy and procedure

12. Major or Gross Offence

- 12.1. Any student(s) suspected of committing a Major or Gross Academic Offence shall be invited to attend a compulsory interview with their Course Leader, or authorised nominee, and shall be given copies of all evidence submitted in support of the allegation. 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.
- 12.2. As part of an interview, if the case warrants it, the student(s) may be tested on subject knowledge by an oral examination. The oral examination shall be conducted by a member of academic staff with knowledge of the subject.
- 12.3. Notice of five working days will be given to the student(s) of the interview date and time.
- 12.4. Student(s) may be accompanied to the interview by a friend or other representative. Under no circumstances may they have legal representation or be represented by an external organisation. An independent third-party will also attend to make a detailed record of the meeting, which will then form part of the evidence to be considered.
- 12.5. Students should contact the Course Leader, or authorised nominee, within two working days of notification of the interview to make alternative arrangements if they are unable to make the original proposed date.
- 12.6. Where a student fails to attend or make alternative arrangements, the investigation should proceed, and consideration should be given to the evidence available, and the student's failure to take the opportunity to present a defence may be a factor in the outcome reached.
- 12.7. Following completion of the interview, the Course Leader shall submit the minutes of the interview and all the evidence to the FE Centre Manager/Head of Education/Head of Learning & Teaching.
- 12.8. The FE Centre Manager/Head of Education/Head of Learning & Teaching, or authorised nominee, will convene an Academic Misconduct Panel comprised of at least two of the following:
 - a) FE Centre Manager
 - b) Head of Education
 - c) Head of Learning & Teaching
 - d) a senior academic member of staff not involved in the delivery of the course.

This Panel will consider the evidence to determine whether assessment related offences have been committed and decide what action should be taken.

- 12.9. If it is determined that a Major Offence has been committed, the student's record will be made

available to the Panel. In arriving at a decision on penalties to be applied, the Panel will take account of any previous offences on record and shall impose the penalties on an individual basis; in cases involving a group of students, each individual will be considered separately.

- 12.10. If, during the course of the Academic Misconduct investigation, evidence of further academic offences is revealed, the penalties will also apply to those assignments affected.
- 12.11. The Academic Misconduct Panel shall impose a formal reprimand to be retained on the student's file for the duration of their course of study and one of the actions outlined in Section 13 shall be applied for each assignment for which an academic offence is found to have been committed:
- 12.12. On completion of the Academic Misconduct Panel investigation, the FE Centre Manager/Head of Education/Head of Learning & Teaching or authorised designate shall notify the student of the outcome of the case in writing.
- 12.13. All Major or Gross Offence cases will normally be concluded within 20 working days of the receipt of the case referral from the Course Leader and will be dealt with by the FE Centre Manager/Head of Education/Head of Learning & Teaching or authorised designate. The total time to conclude a Major or Gross Offence case is normally 25 working days.
- 12.14. All Major, or Gross Offence cases are referred to the relevant partner Awarding Organisation(s) for review. If an academic offence is revealed, any student(s) concerned may be subject to further penalties as per Awarding Organisation policy and procedure

13. **Penalties Available for Academic Misconduct**

Category	Action	Maximum mark available for assessment	Offence recorded on the Student's File	Student has the right to appropriate exit award	Applicable Offences
0	None There is no case to answer	N/A	N/A	N/A	None
1	Warning Work marked excluding offending sections, student required to attend academic good practice tutorial and then resubmit for unpenalised mark. Warning letter issued.	Distinction	Yes	N/A	Poor Academic Practice
2	Fail Assignment with right to re-sit assignment	Pass	Yes	N/A	Minor Offence
3	Fail Assignment with right to re-sit assignment	Pass	Yes	N/A	Major Offence OR second offence of minor plagiarism
4	Fail Unit with right to re-sit unit	Ungraded	Yes	Yes	Gross Offence OR second offence of major plagiarism
5	Fail Course no right to redeem credit or progress	Ungraded	Yes	Yes	Gross Offence OR second offence of major plagiarism

14. Appeals Against Decisions on Academic Misconduct

- 14.1. Students shall have the right of appeal against decisions concerning Academic Misconduct in accordance with the Awarding Body's policy and process. The FE Centre Manager/Head of Education/Head of Learning & Teaching should be contacted in the first instance for guidance in this regard.