

**The  
Sheffield  
College**

▶ **University  
Level**

# **Assessment Malpractice or Academic Misconduct Policy and Procedure for Higher Education Students**

## Document Information:

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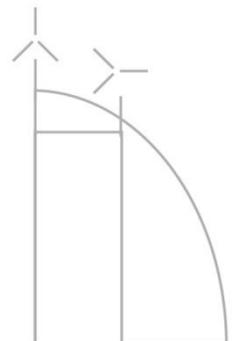
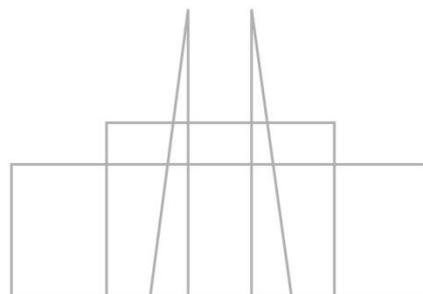
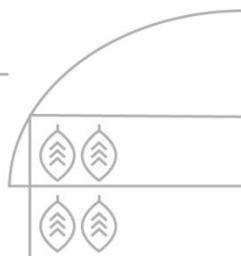
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The College is committed to consistent, valid and reliable assessment that meets the requirements of QAA, the Open University, [Sheffield Hallam University Assessment Regulations](#), [Edexcel BTEC HNC/D regulations](#), the University of Sheffield and the College Charter.

## 1 Summary overview

1.2 This assessment malpractice policy covers the summative assessment of all HE students, including those assessed in the workplace. It covers teacher-assessed work and examinations, and is derived directly from regulatory body requirements. Assessment malpractice, also known as academic misconduct, can involve both students and members of staff.

1.3 The College will:

- ensure all staff members know and follow the College's malpractice policy & guidance
- deal with cases of malpractice through the student or staff disciplinary procedures
- tell students about the College's malpractice policy, making clear that plagiarism is regarded as malpractice and is dealt with via the student disciplinary procedure
- include statements on malpractice in the student handbook and in each course handbook, ensuring consistency throughout the College
- teach students what plagiarism and collusion are, during induction or at the start of each course
- teach students how to avoid plagiarism, for example, citation, referencing, etc
- require teachers to design out opportunities for plagiarism
- ensure staff make clear the extent to which students can collaborate on assessed work
- use electronic aids (for example Google and Turnitin) for detection of plagiarism

## 2. Dealing with malpractice

- The College views all instances of malpractice, including plagiarism, as a serious offence.
- The College will respond to all allegations of malpractice in accordance with the relevant Awarding Body regulations, including the Open University, [Sheffield Hallam University Assessment Regulations](#) and [Edexcel BTEC HNC/D regulations](#)
- This may require the College to report any suspected malpractice involving candidates, Centre staff or any other party, to the Awarding Body.
- It may also require the College to investigate, in which case the Student Disciplinary or Staff Disciplinary procedure will be used.
- Instances of malpractice that are upheld following investigation, will lead to disciplinary action.

### 3. College staff malpractice

#### 3.1 Non-compliance, for example:

- failure to follow Awarding Body assessment regulations, eg the Open University Student Regulations, [Sheffield Hallam University Assessment Regulations](#) and [Edexcel BTEC HNC/D regulations](#)
- failure to deal with issues identified by Awarding Bodies
- misuse of the conditions for special student requirements

#### 3.2 Maladministration, for example:

- failure to keep assessment papers or mark schemes secure prior to assessment
- failure to maintain appropriate records
- failure to keep student computer files secure

#### 3.3 Professional misconduct, for example:

- deliberate falsification of records, witness statements, certificates, etc
- fraudulent certificate claims, for example, claiming for a certificate prior to the student completing all the requirements of assessment
- allowing evidence, known by the staff member not to be the student's own, to be included in a student's assignment/task/portfolio/coursework
- alteration of mark schemes or assessment and grading criteria
- helping students to complete assessments
- giving students access to test papers, supplying answers, etc
- giving information on formal assessment outcomes before the official release of such information by the Awarding Body

### 4. Student malpractice

#### 4.1 Misconduct, for example:

- any form of impersonation
- falsification, fabrication or alteration of results, certificates or assessment evidence
- failure to follow Awarding Body regulations (eg, the Open University Student Regulations, [Sheffield Hallam University Assessment Regulations](#) and [Edexcel BTEC HNC/D regulations](#) ) or the instructions or advice of assessors, supervisors or invigilators
- misuse of assessment or examination material
- taking unauthorised material into assessment rooms
- obtaining, receiving, exchanging or passing on assessment-related information during assessment sessions
- behaviour that disrupts or undermines the integrity of assessment
- any form of cheating to gain an unfair advantage
- deliberate destruction of another person's work
- resubmitting previously graded work

#### 4.2 Collusion

- unauthorised co-operation between a student and another person, in or outside of College, in the preparation and production of work that is eventually submitted by one or both students as the outcome of his or her individual efforts
- allowing another student to copy one's own work

Students should not be discouraged from teamwork, as this is an essential key skill for many subject areas. However, methods of avoiding collusion, for example, the use of minutes, allocating tasks, agreeing outcomes, etc, are an essential part of team work, and the requirement to use such methods must be made clear to all students.

## 5 Plagiarism

### 5.1 Definition of plagiarism

Plagiarism is where a student submits someone else's work as if it is their own.

- copying work (artwork, images, artefacts, products, designs, words) from a published source and presenting the copied work as if it were the student's own
- the use of another person's work (artwork, images, artefacts, products, designs, words), with or without permission, without appropriately acknowledging the source

Examples of plagiarism include:

- copying from published text without an acknowledgement of source;
- copying images, graphs, tables, art, music etc, without acknowledging the source;
- copying small or large sections of assignments from other students;
- downloading original material from the internet without acknowledging the source;
- imitating too closely an existing work of art or music, design idea or concept

**Plagiarism is a form of malpractice or academic misconduct. It is wrong, whether done deliberately or accidentally, to claim someone else's work, thoughts or ideas as one's own.**

## 6. Consequences of malpractice or academic misconduct

### 6.1. Sheffield Hallam University courses

Students are subject to the University's procedures for academic misconduct which are located [https://students.shu.ac.uk/regulations/conduct\\_discipline/index.html](https://students.shu.ac.uk/regulations/conduct_discipline/index.html) Stage one of this procedure invokes the college disciplinary procedure which is included in the student charter.

All cases of malpractice or academic misconduct are reported to the end of semester Review Board.

### 6.2 The University of Sheffield courses

Students are subject to the University of Sheffield policy and procedures and reported directly to the university by the course leader.

### 6.3 The Open University and Pearson courses

Students are subject to the college disciplinary procedures at stages 1 and 2. This can be found in the 'Positive Engagement and Disciplinary Process' on the college website (pages 6-7).

During the disciplinary process the AMBeR tariff may be applied. This is a points based system with penalties according to the number of points scored. Points are based on the following criteria:

<b>History of malpractice:</b>	
<b>Number of occasions of malpractice</b>	<b>Points</b>
1st Time	100
2nd Time	150
3rd/+ Time	200
<b>Extent of Malpractice</b>	
Below 5% AND less than two sentences	80
As above but with *critical aspects plagiarised	105
Between 5% and 20% OR more than two sentences but not more than two paragraphs	105
As above but with *critical aspects plagiarised	130
<i>* Critical aspects are key ideas central to the assignment</i>	
<b>Level of study</b>	
4	70
5	115
6	140
<b>Credit weighting of assignment</b>	
20	30
40	60
60	90
<b>Additional characteristics</b>	
Evidence of deliberate attempt to disguise plagiarism by changing words, sentences or references to avoid detection	40

For details of the sanctions theses points attract, see Annex 1 - Impact of sanctions below.

## Annex 1- Impact of sanctions – Application of AMBeR Tariff

Points	Sanction	Explanation	Impact on student if at initial attempt	Impact on student if at referral or re-sit attempt	Notes
280-329	Warning	Written warning issued.	Original mark stands but student is formally reprimanded and a record kept on file for the duration of the course.	Original mark stands but student is formally reprimanded and record kept on file for the duration of the course.	
330-355	Resubmit the assessed work for the assessment task affected by academic misconduct (i.e. coursework of the same title and content). The resubmitted work receives a capped mark.	The student repeats the attempt at the task affected by academic misconduct by submitting the reworked task (i.e. coursework of the same title and content). The reworked task receives a capped mark irrespective of whether it is the initial or referral attempt that is repeated.	Attempt repeated and mark for reworked task is capped at the pass mark. Referral available if required.	Attempt repeated and mark for the reworked task is capped at the pass mark.	Student cannot fail a module directly because of the sanction.
356-379	Submit a new piece of work for the assessment task affected by academic misconduct. This would normally be a different title (requiring different content). The work receives a capped mark.	The student repeats the attempt at the task affected by academic misconduct by submitting a new piece of work for that task. This will normally be a different title requiring different content. The task receives a capped mark irrespective of whether it is the initial or referral attempt that is repeated.	Attempt repeated and mark for resubmitted (new) work capped at the pass mark. Referral available if required.	Attempt repeated and mark for resubmitted (new) work capped at the pass mark.	Student cannot fail a module directly because of the sanction.

<p><b>380-479</b></p>	<p><b>Fail in all assessment tasks in the module concerned.</b></p>	<p>The student loses an attempt at all assessment tasks in the module concerned.</p>	<p>Initial attempt is lost. Referral attempt remains available.</p>	<p>Referral attempt is lost and no further attempts permitted. The module mark is calculated based on the initial attempt only.</p>	<p>This sanction will have a greater impact on those students already at the referral attempt. Most will fail the module unless they meet the profile for a compensated pass from the initial attempt.</p>
<p><b>480-524</b></p>	<p><b>Fail in the module, with reassessment only allowed after further attendance on a taught programme. This will require retake of the failed module, capping the overall module mark will apply.</b></p>	<p>The student fails the module affected by academic misconduct.</p>	<p>Re-register for the failed module the following academic year.</p>	<p>No further retake available.</p>	
<p><b>525-559</b></p>	<p><b>Fail in the module affected, with all other modules taken at that level or during the period concerned capped at the pass mark. Reassessment in the failed module will only be allowed after further attendance on a taught programme. This will require retake of the failed module capping the overall module mark</b></p>	<p>The student fails the module affected by academic misconduct. All other modules taken at the level or during a period specified by the Academic Conduct Panel will be capped at the pass mark.</p>	<p>Retake available in accordance with Standard Assessment Regulation 9.</p>	<p>No further retake available.</p>	

<b>560+</b>	<b>Fail in the module concerned, with no reassessment or retake, allowed in the failed module.</b>	The student fails the module. No retake or substitution of the failed module is permitted	Student cannot continue on the course.	Student cannot continue on the course.	Depending on the amount of credit already achieved, student may be entitled to an intermediate/fall-back award
<b>560+</b>	<b>Fail in all modules taken at the level or during the period concerned, with no reassessment or retake, and no re- entry to the programme of study.</b>	The student fails all modules taken at the level or during a period specified by the Academic Conduct Panel. No retake or substitution of the failed module is permitted.	Student cannot continue on the course.	Student cannot continue on the course.	Depending on the amount of credit already achieved, student may be entitled to an intermediate/fall-back award