



Regulations regarding Plagiarism and Cheating

UNIVERSITY REGULATIONS REGARDING PLAGIARISM AND CHEATING

(These regulations were previously located in appendix 7 of the University Assessment Regulations.)

Please refer to Section 1.5 for definitions of plagiarism and cheating.

1.1 Plagiarism: Regulations and Procedures¹

1.1.1 Where plagiarism is suspected, the Module Leader concerned shall report the matter in writing to the **Head of Department** within which the module is located. The report shall contain full details of the circumstances surrounding the alleged irregularity, including all appropriate documentary evidence. Any further consideration of the student's work for the module where plagiarism is suspected and for all other modules undertaken in the Trimester shall be held in abeyance until the procedures below have been completed, which should normally be within 30 days. The student will receive notification of any penalty in accordance with the process outlined in 1.1.4 (iv).

1.1.2 In the first instance the Head of Department shall consult with The Department of Governance and Quality Enhancement to ascertain if the student has previously committed plagiarism. Thereafter the Head of Department shall:

- assess the extent of the suspected plagiarism and will deal with suspected cases that are first offences and not considered to be major.
- refer all suspected repeat offences and suspected cases of major offences to a Plagiarism Assessor², via The Department of Governance and Quality Enhancement, for investigation under the provisions of Section 1.1.5 below.
- **all cases of confirmed third offences will be referred to the Senate Disciplinary Committee.**

In minor cases, where the matter is dealt with at Departmental level, the process will be managed by the School. In all other cases the process will be managed by The Department of Governance and Quality Enhancement.

1.1.3 In determining what constitutes a major offence, the Head of Department will take into account the student's level of study and length of exposure to the procedures, practices and regulations of the University. In addition, the Head of Department may consult informally with an independent Plagiarism Assessor, assigned by The Department of Governance and Quality Enhancement, if he/she requires advice as whether or not the case is a major offence. The Head of Department should also discuss the case informally with the School's Associate Dean of Learning Teaching and Quality to ensure that the Associate Dean's University wide experience as a Plagiarism Assessor is utilised to confirm that the proposed actions are in line with normal University practice.

1.1.4 First Offences

- i. With respect to first offences which are not considered to be major, the student will be informed in writing by the Head of Department of the alleged offence and of the requirement to attend for interview, as soon as is practicable. *Where the Head of Department has a potential conflict of interest, he/she should pass the case to another Head of Department within the School.*

¹ Regulations and procedures addressing all other forms of cheating and academic irregularity begin at paragraph 1.2.

² The Plagiarism Assessors will be the Associate Deans of Learning, Teaching and Quality or other appropriate member of academic staff. In any investigation, the Plagiarism Assessor (and their School) will not have any involvement with the student at programme or module level. The Department of Governance and Quality Enhancement will assign an appropriate Plagiarism Assessor.

ii. The student shall have the right to be accompanied, assisted or represented at the interview by one of the following:

- a parent or guardian;
- a fellow student or other friend;
- an Officer of the Students' Association;
- a member of University staff.

At the beginning of the interview, the Head of Department will ascertain who is to be the spokesperson for the student (the student or a representative). The Head of Department shall have the right, however, to question the student directly where necessary. The Head of Department will also retain a record of the meeting.

iii. At the interview, the student will be shown his or her work and given a clear explanation of the alleged irregularity. The student will be given the opportunity to justify the work.

iv. If the Head of Department is satisfied beyond all reasonable doubt that an offence has occurred he or she will:

- Decide on the penalty to be imposed. This will either be resubmission of the work or reduction in the mark for the assignment up to and including a mark of zero;
- Notify the Chair of the Assessment Board of the penalty in writing;
- Notify The Department of Governance and Quality Enhancement of the penalty in writing. The Department of Governance and Quality Enhancement will add the case to the central register of students who have plagiarised;
- Notify the student in writing of the penalty imposed and their right of appeal (see 1.4);
- Ensure that the student is given written instruction about plagiarism and the necessity of properly acknowledging and referencing sources prior to any resubmission.

v. If the Head of Department is not satisfied that an offence has occurred but considers that the student has engaged in poor academic practice then the student will receive a warning and written instructions about plagiarism. The Department of Governance and Quality Enhancement will be notified that an investigation has taken place and that no further action will be taken.

vi. If it is judged that there is no case for the student to answer, the student will be informed in writing by the Head of Department and the piece of work in question will be marked in accordance with normal arrangements, without penalty. The Department of Governance and Quality Enhancement will be notified that an investigation has taken place and that no further action will be taken.

1.1.5 Major Offences/Second Offences

i. Where an allegation of a major or repeat offence has occurred, the case will be referred by the Head of Department via The Department of Governance and Quality Enhancement to a Plagiarism Assessor. The Head of Department is responsible for ensuring that the case passed to The Department of Governance and Quality Enhancement is accompanied by **all** relevant documentation including a signed **Plagiarism Major Offence Pro-forma**. On receipt of the case, The Department of Governance and Quality Enhancement will immediately advise the student in writing that a major or repeat plagiarism offence is suspected to have occurred and that an investigation by an independent Plagiarism Assessor is in progress. The student will be informed of their right to appear before the Plagiarism Assessor accompanied by a representative (as described in paragraph 1.1.4

above) and that full details of the alleged irregularity will be made available to the student at the interview.

- ii. The Plagiarism Assessor shall arrange to interview the student and, as appropriate, come to a decision on the basis of the student's statement and the supporting evidence.
- iii. Failure by the student to appear before the Plagiarism Assessor or to submit a statement shall not prevent the investigation proceeding.
- iv. If the Plagiarism Assessor decides the student has committed an offence, the following outcomes are possible:
 - the rescindment of the assessment result or the complete examination diet (in this case this means all coursework and formal examinations) at issue. In either case the rescinded result will count as an attempt(s) at the module assessment;
 - the matter is referred directly to the Senate Disciplinary Committee (this would be automatic in the case of a confirmed third offence);
 - the student is given written instruction about plagiarism and the necessity of properly acknowledging and referencing sources. **It is the responsibility of the Head of Department to ensure that this happens as soon as possible after the investigation has concluded and prior to any resubmission;**
- v. The Plagiarism Assessor will notify The Department of Governance and Quality Enhancement of his/her decision.
- vi. The Department of Governance and Quality Enhancement will:
 - Notify the relevant Head of Department in writing;
 - Notify the Chair of the relevant Assessment Board in writing; it should be noted that the Assessment Board may amend the penalty in exceptional circumstances which must be properly minuted at the Assessment Board.³ The chair of the Assessment Board must also provide The Department of Governance and Quality Enhancement with a copy of the minute. An example of such a situation would be where Consideration of Mitigating Circumstances has been upheld and the Board feels that the Mitigating Circumstances were a sufficient mitigation for the plagiarism.
 - Notify any other relevant programme staff in writing;
 - Add the case to the central register of students who have plagiarised;
 - Notify the student in writing of the penalty imposed and his/her right of appeal.
 - Advise the student, if appropriate, to consult with their programme organiser to receive guidance/advice as to the academic implications of the penalty imposed.
- vii. If the Plagiarism Assessor is not satisfied that an offence has occurred but considers that the student has engaged in poor academic practice, the student will receive a warning and written instruction about plagiarism from the Plagiarism Assessor. The Plagiarism Assessor will also notify The Department of Governance and Quality Enhancement, who will notify the Head of Department and the Chair of the relevant Assessment Board in writing of the outcome of the investigation. The provisions of bullet point 2 in vi above also apply in this case.
- viii. If the Plagiarism Assessor judges that there is no case for the student to answer, he/she will notify The Department of Governance and Quality Enhancement that an

³ Where programmes have programme specific regulations relating to Professional and Statutory Body *fitness for practice* requirements, the penalty may be amended to meet the requirements of these regulations. These regulations should be clearly described in the programme specific regulations in the programme documentation.

investigation has taken place and that no further action is to be taken. The student will be informed in writing by The Department of Governance and Quality Enhancement and the piece of work in question will be marked in accordance with normal arrangements and without penalty.

1.2 **Cheating in Formal Assessments: Regulations and Procedures**

Examinations

1.2.1 Where an academic irregularity is suspected in an examination, the senior invigilator shall act in accordance with the procedures set out in the Scheme of Invigilation⁴ and shall report the alleged irregularity to The Department of Governance and Quality Enhancement utilising the senior invigilator's report form. On receipt of notification of an alleged academic irregularity, The Department of Governance and Quality Enhancement shall proceed in accordance with the Code of Student Discipline⁵ and shall instigate the procedures required under the regulations in order that the alleged academic irregularity may be investigated and considered by the Senate Disciplinary Committee as appropriate.

Other Formal Assessments

1.2.2 Where an academic irregularity is suspected in any other formal assessment, the matter will be referred to the Executive Dean of School (or equivalent) to determine whether or not the offence constitutes a major or minor offence under the terms of the Code of Student Discipline. Cases of plagiarism will be dealt with under the procedures for plagiarism detailed in 1.1 above.

All Formal Assessments

1.2.3 The Department of Governance and Quality Enhancement will inform the Chair of the appropriate Assessment Board in writing that an investigation into an alleged examination irregularity is underway.

1.2.4 The Assessment Board will not consider the case of any student who is the subject of an enquiry into an alleged irregularity in an examination. However, all course work and examination scripts that are available shall be marked in the normal manner.

1.2.5 In the event of the allegation not being sustained by the Senate Disciplinary Committee, the relevant Assessment Board will be required to consider the student's performance in the normal manner. However, the Chair of the Assessment Board may, after due consultation with relevant internal and External Examiners, take Chair's action to avoid the need for a formal meeting of the Assessment Board.

1.2.6 Should the allegation be sustained, the matter will be considered by the Senate Disciplinary Committee. The Clerk to the Senate Disciplinary Committee shall inform the relevant Chair of the Assessment Board of the outcome of the investigation.

1.2.7 **Penalties**

The Senate Disciplinary Committee has the power to impose penalties. These include:⁶

⁴ See Assessment and Graduation Processes section 1.

⁵ <http://www.gcu.ac.uk/student/about/regulations/documents/CodeofStudentDiscipline.doc>

⁶ Code of Student Discipline, section 4

- an admonition
- a reprimand
- disqualification from appropriate examinations/assessments
- suspension for a specified period
- expulsion

1.3 Late Discovery

Where an alleged academic irregularity comes to light after an Assessment Board has met to consider a student's assessment the procedure shall be the same as described above.

The Assessment Board shall be reconvened as soon as practicable following receipt by the Chair of the Board of the result of the investigation and the recommended penalty.

If the outcome of the reconvened Assessment Board affects the student's final result, the Chair of the Assessment Board shall inform The Department of Governance and Quality Enhancement in writing of the reasons for the varied result. The Department of Governance and Quality Enhancement will inform the student of the altered final result with the reasons.

1.4 Appeals⁷

Plagiarism

A student may appeal against the decision following an investigation as follows:

- i. where the decision was taken by a Head of Department, the student may appeal to a Plagiarism Assessor, appointed by The Department of Governance and Quality Enhancement.
- ii. where the decision was taken by a Plagiarism Assessor, the student may appeal to the Senate Disciplinary Committee. The decision of the Senate Disciplinary Committee, in the case of such an appeal, will be final.

Cheating or other academic irregularity

A student may appeal against the decision following an investigation as follows:

- i. where the decision was taken by an Executive Dean of School (or equivalent), the student may appeal to the Senate Disciplinary Committee.
- ii. where the decision was taken by the Senate Disciplinary Committee, the student may appeal to the Appeal Committee of the University Court.

Appeals will only be considered where new information is presented which was not previously made available during the investigation and valid supporting evidence must be provided.

1.5 Definitions

1.5.1 Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the deliberate and substantial unacknowledged incorporation in a student's work of material derived from the work (published or unpublished) of another. Examples of plagiarism include:

- i) The extensive use of another person's material without reference or acknowledgement
- ii) The summarising of another person's work by changing some words or altering the order of presentation without acknowledgement

⁷ Code of Student Discipline, sections 5 and 6

- iii) The substantial and unauthorised use of the ideas of another person without acknowledgement of the source
- iv) Copying the work of another student with or without that student's knowledge or agreement
- v) Deliberate use of commissioned material and presented as the student's own
- vi) Collusion
- vii) Self-plagiarism (the re-use of own previously written work or data presented for assessment on a previous occasion)

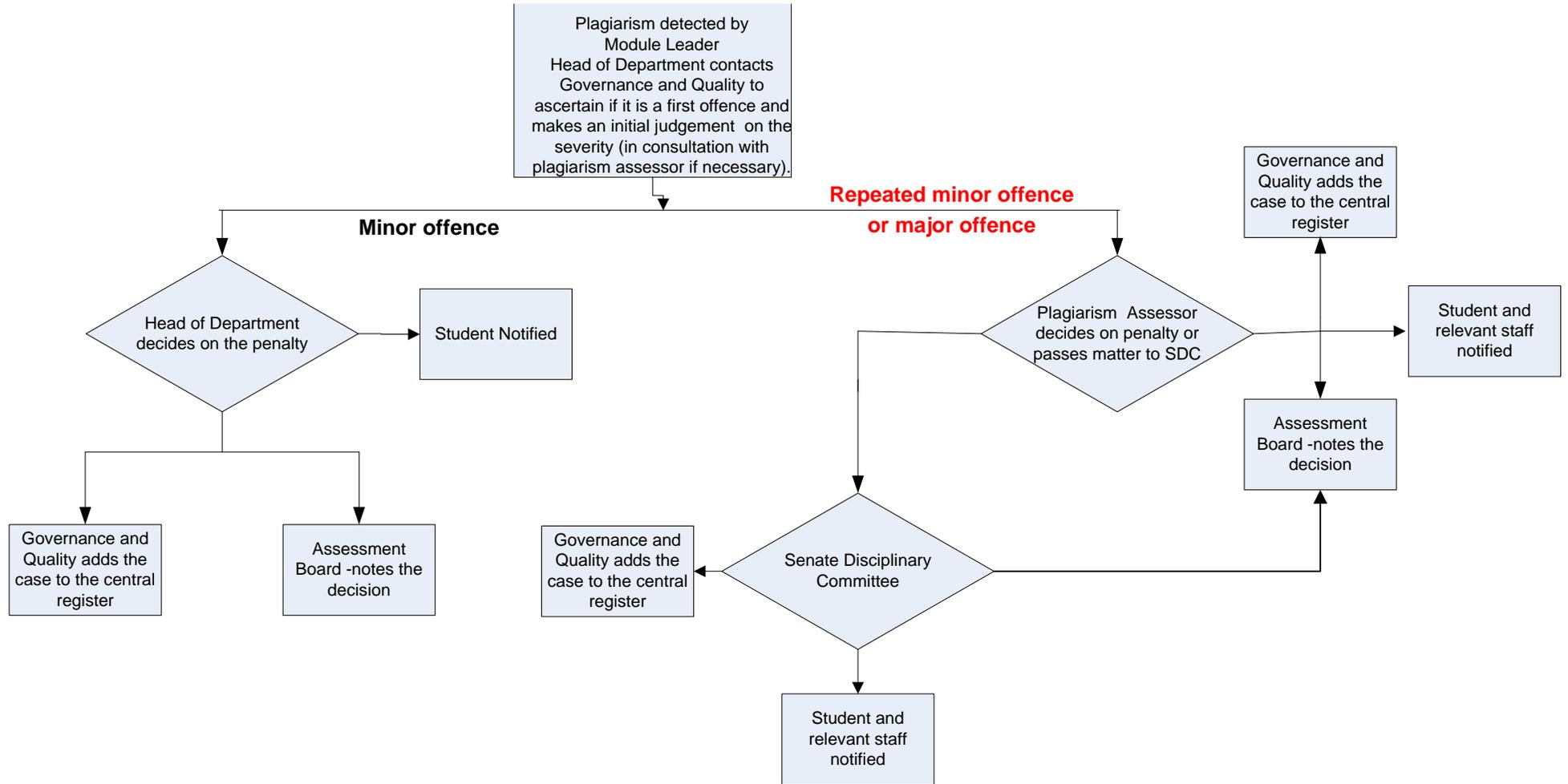
1.5.2 Cheating

Examples of cheating include:

- i) Communicating during an examination with any person other than a properly authorised invigilator or another authorised member of staff
- ii) Introducing any written or printed materials into the examination room unless expressly permitted by the Assessment Board or programme regulations
- iii) Introducing any electronically stored information into the examination room unless expressly permitted by the Assessment Board or programme regulations
- iv) Gaining access to any unauthorised material relating to an examination during or before the examination
- v) Obtaining a copy of an 'unseen' written examination paper in advance of the date and time for its authorised release
- vi) Falsifying data
- vii) Personating

*Revised regulations approved by APC, 11 October 2006
(Amended October 2007, October 2008 and September 2010, October 2011)*

Flow diagram of procedures in respect of plagiarism



PLAGIARISM MAJOR OFFENCE PROFORMA

This form is to be used for the reporting of suspected Major Offences of Plagiarism to The Department of Governance and Quality Enhancement. On completion by Head of Department, please return to Plagiarism Offences, The Department of Governance and Quality Enhancement, Room B128, Britannia Building.

Student Name:		Student ID Number:	
School:		Course & Level:	
Head of Dept:		Programme Leader:	
AB Chair:		Module Leader(s):	

Has the central register for plagiarism been checked for a previous offence:	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is this a first offence? (Please check with The Department of Governance and Quality Enhancement):	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
	No	<input type="checkbox"/>

In the case of a second/repeat offence please detail what guidance was previously given to the student:

Please list the module(s) and Trimester in which plagiarism has occurred:

Please provide details of the offence providing as much information as possible including details of evidence being presented for investigation.

In my capacity as Head of Department I consider this to constitute a Major Offence of Plagiarism in terms of the University Regulations regarding Cheating and Plagiarism.

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____