

## Regulations Governing Academic Integrity

**This document includes the variances to Policy and Procedure which were approved for the period covering the Covid-19 pandemic. Variations to the standard Regulations are in red.**

### Introduction

These Regulations aim to encourage the operation of a "learning community" at the University in which our students and staff learn from one another whilst conducting themselves with courtesy, integrity, honesty and mutual respect.

The Regulations are divided into two sections:

**Section A:** sets out the scope, definitions and application of these Regulations and the principles to be applied in all cases.

**Section B:** outlines the Procedure to be followed in all cases of suspected breaches of Academic Integrity.

These Regulations outline the usual timescales. Please note that when 'working days' are referred to; this excludes weekends, bank holidays and University closure days.

Students may obtain free, independent and confidential advice about Academic Integrity at any point from the Students' Union Advice Centre. Additional information and guidance can be found in the University's [Quality Handbook](#).

For students based overseas, localised arrangements may need to be applied.

These Regulations are made subject to the Charter, Statutes and Ordinances of the University.

## Section A: Scope, definitions, application and principles

### 1. What is Academic Integrity?

1.1 Academic Integrity is integral to studying at University and a guiding principle of academic life. At its most basic, Academic Integrity describes acting with honesty and responsibility in one's own academic work (which throughout these Regulations means work undertaken for formative and summative assessments, your academic practice and your academic working relations with others). Maintaining Academic Integrity therefore requires:

- 1.1.1 Appropriately acknowledging all sources of information drawn upon in your own academic work according to the citation and referencing practices of the discipline within which you are working;
- 1.1.2 Never seeking to obtain unfair advantage for yourself or another in any form of academic assessment or examination;
- 1.1.3 Collaborating with others when appropriate but knowing when you need to produce your own, independent work;
- 1.1.4 Never obtaining unauthorised external assistance in the creation of work that you submit for assessment;
- 1.1.5 Always presenting accurate data and information in your academic work;
- 1.1.6 Declaring when you have used academic work that you have previously submitted in another academic context and using it only with the University's permission and appropriate citation;

- 1.1.7 Complying with the ethical requirements for the research projects that you undertake, including the University Ethics Policy; and
- 1.1.8 Complying with and undertaking your research responsibly, following all necessary regulatory, legal and professional obligations.

Although maintaining Academic Integrity provides the central focus of these Regulations, the majority of information provided relates to failure to maintain (i.e., breaches of) Academic Integrity.

1.2 A breach of these Regulations means that a student acts or behaves in a manner which is inconsistent with the statements above or assists others in doing so. This may occur as a result of mistake, negligence or as a result of intentional misconduct. The University specifically recognises each of the following as a breach of these Regulations and examples of each type of conduct can be found in guidance available from the University's Quality Handbook. There may be other breaches of Academic Integrity which are not specifically referred to here, and some breaches may fall into more than one category. Specific breaches are:

- 1.2.1 *Plagiarism*: is the use of ideas, intellectual property, or work of others (including that of another student) without appropriate acknowledgement and/or indication, thereby presenting someone else's work and/or ideas as your own.
- 1.2.2 *Cheating*: is any action before, during, or after an examination or assessment by which you seek to gain unfair advantage or assist another student to do so. This includes the possession of unauthorised material or technology during an examination and attempting to access unseen assessment materials in advance of an examination.
- 1.2.3 *Collusion*: is working with another student or students in an unauthorised way to create academic work that should be created by a student independently.
- 1.2.4 *External authorship/assistance*: is where you present work as your own that has been created using unauthorised external input including ghost-writing or use of commercial essay mills or any other form of contract cheating, whether that input is obtained on a commercial basis or not.
- 1.2.5 *Falsification*: is any attempt to present fictitious or distorted data, evidence, references, experimental results, or other material and/or knowingly to make use of such material.
- 1.2.6 *Recycling*: (sometimes referred to as self-plagiarism) is where a piece of work or part thereof which has already been used in one context is used again (without appropriate acknowledgement or authorisation) in another context.
- 1.2.7 *Breaching ethical standards*: is failing to comply with your ethical obligations when carrying out your academic work as set out in the University Ethics Policy and the applicable ethical requirements for your subject area, such as failing to obtain free and informed consent.
- 1.2.8 *Misconduct in Research*: includes any of the above breaches in relation to research and/or other factors including a failure to comply with regulatory, legal and professional obligations such as a breach of confidentiality, infringement of intellectual property rights, failure to take due care for participants in research or of personal data, and abuse of research subjects or materials (including artefacts).

1.3 Breaches that are committed through inexperience or lack of understanding and which are limited in scope or their effect on the academic work concerned may be considered by the University to be Minor breaches of Academic Integrity. All other instances shall be considered a Major breach of Academic Integrity.

## 2. Whose conduct may be investigated under these Regulations?

2.1 The conduct of any person who is, or was, at the time of the potential breach of Academic Integrity to be investigated, enrolled as a student of the University, (including students in nominal

registration and studying off campus for any reason) can be investigated under these Regulations. These Regulations apply to students on all programmes of study.

- 2.2 These Regulations may also apply (at the University's discretion) to students enrolled at another institution but who are visiting the University to carry out some of their studies under the direction of the University. The applicability of these Regulations will, however, be subject to the terms of the agreement entered into between the University and the other institution and these students may also be referred to their institution to initiate proceedings under the regulations of that institution.
- 2.3 At any time, the University may take action against a former student. Former students will be subject to the Academic Integrity Regulations that were in place when they first registered as a student at the University on the programme to which the breach relates.

### 3. Responsibilities

- 3.1 Except in cases for which a matter has been reserved for a decision by the Senate, Senate hereby delegates responsibility for the application of these Regulations to the Deans and their senior staff. The Dean (or nominee) of each faculty will appoint a co-ordinating Academic Integrity Officer (AIO) who will liaise with School AIOs, their Associate Dean (Education) and the Quality, Standards and Accreditation Team in advising on and developing AI policy and regulations. The Head of each School (or nominee) shall nominate one or more Academic Integrity Officers (AIO's) for their School and ensure internal processes meet the procedural elements of these Regulations.

### 4. Disclosure of Information

- 4.1 The University will process all personal information in accordance with its *Data Protection Policy*.
- 4.2 The University will disclose all information related to a case to: inform the student of the allegations made and give him/her an opportunity to respond, to allow an investigation to be conducted, to disclose information about an outcome under these Regulations, for the discharge of its duties (including contractual obligations owed to third parties) or as required by law.
- 4.3 Audio and/or visual recordings of meetings are normally not permitted. If, due to exceptional circumstances, it is agreed in advance that a recording is permitted, it is on condition that the recording is confidential and must not be copied, shared with any third party, published or disseminated in any way. A true and complete copy of the recording of the meeting must be provided to the other party as soon as possible after the recording was made.

### 5. Penalties

- 5.1 The penalties for breaches of Academic Integrity are set out below. Examples of penalties aligned to different types of breaches are for illustrative purposes, may be updated by the University, and can be found at [http://www.southampton.ac.uk/quality/assessment/academic\\_integrity.page](http://www.southampton.ac.uk/quality/assessment/academic_integrity.page). Each case will be assessed on its own merits.
- 5.2 A record of any breach of these Regulations that has resulted in the imposition of a penalty shall be given due consideration when imposing a penalty in any subsequent breach of these Regulations involving that student.
- 5.3 Regardless of whether a breach is initially considered as Minor or Major, this classification may change and the range of penalties available will likewise change. Findings of a breach are made on the evidence available and a balance of probabilities.
- 5.4 Terms appearing in bold in this section have the same meaning as defined in the *Regulations and Definitions applying to Progression for all Credit-Bearing Programmes*. One or more of the following penalties may be imposed. The University may:
  - 5.4.1 Issue a written warning;

- 5.4.2 Award a mark appropriate to the work submitted (which may include a mark of zero) that excludes credit for any words and/or ideas presented in breach of these regulations, including but not limited to, plagiarism, recycling, falsification, or collusion;
- 5.4.3 Require the student to re-submit the piece of work, addressing the identified issues but without revising the intellectual content of the work, for a reduced maximum mark (normally the pass mark) within a specified timescale;
- 5.4.4 Prohibit the use of data or analysis of data in the work to be submitted in the future if the data collection or data analysis was conducted in breach of a student's obligations. In such cases, the student may also receive a reduced maximum mark on the work eventually submitted;
- 5.4.5 Award a mark of zero (0) for the piece of work;
- 5.4.6 Impose a **Fail** for the **Module** that the piece of work contributes towards;
- 5.4.7 Impose a **Fail** of the **Part** or a programme as a whole;
- 5.4.8 Remove the right of **Referral** where it would otherwise exist in addition to imposing one or more of the penalties described above;
- 5.4.9 Reduce the student's degree class (which decision may only be taken by the Dean of the Faculty, or nominee, and reported to Senate);
- 5.4.10 In a progression review or final thesis for research students:
  - a. Require minor amendments to the review document or thesis addressing the identified issues within a specified timescale, without revising the intellectual content of the work;
  - b. Require the correction of modest errors or omissions of substance addressing the identified issues within a specified timescale, without revising the intellectual content of the work;
  - c. Require that the student resubmits a revised review document or thesis addressing the identified issues, without revising the intellectual content of the work, within a specified timescale. For a confirmation/upgrade this will be before confirmation/upgrade may be approved. For a final thesis this will be for the same degree for re-examination on one subsequent occasion;
  - d. Give the student permission to apply within a specified time for the award of the degree of MPhil instead, which submission may include re-examination and a viva voce;
  - e. The penalties in (a) to (d) above may also involve an additional requirement for the student to exclude any data, analysis and interpretation of data which have been included in breach of a student's obligations from the revised review document or final thesis;
  - f. Fail the progression/confirmation process or fail the final thesis with no right to re-submit.
- 5.4.11 Terminate a programme (which decision may only be taken by the Dean of the Faculty (or nominee) and reported to Senate);
- 5.4.12 Withdraw an award (which decision may only be taken by Senate).

## 6. Appeals

- 6.1 An appeal against a decision made by the Academic Integrity Panel (AI Panel) may be made under the *Regulations Governing Academic Appeals by Students*.

## 7. Recording, Monitoring and Reporting

- 7.1 The University will record, monitor and report Academic Integrity breaches. Records of breaches will be maintained in line with the University's *Retention of Assessment Material and Student Records Policy*.
- 7.2 The outcome of such monitoring may identify trends, inform other University practices, procedures or activities and enable the sharing of information across faculties as may be required.
- 7.3 The University will disclose the nature of a major breach and the penalty imposed by it to parties outside the University when it considers it necessary to do so.

## 8. Relationship with other Regulations

- 8.1 If a breach of these Regulations involves other University Regulations, or policies, advice should be sought from the Head of Academic Appeals and Student Complaints about how, or whether, to progress under these Regulations. The progress of a matter through any stage of the Procedure in Section B may be suspended for a reasonable period of time to deal with the above matter.

## Section B: The Procedure

Reasonable adjustments to this procedure may be made, when appropriate, for students with additional needs or to allow for other factors that would otherwise place a student at a disadvantage. This may include holding meetings by videoconferencing (e.g. Skype), telephone conferencing, or other appropriate means, by prior arrangement.

All stages of this procedure will be conducted by the School responsible for the assessed piece of work (the "Host School"). Communication will be sent by the Curriculum and Quality Assurance (CQA) team in the Host Faculty. If the Host School and the School in which the student is enrolled (the "Home School") are not the same, the CQA Team in the student's Home Faculty must be kept informed throughout by the CQA team in the Host Faculty.

### 1. Support

- 1.1 During all stages described in these Regulations, students may be accompanied to AI meetings or Panel hearings by another member of the University (usually either a member of staff or a fellow student), or by an advisor from the Students' Union Advice Centre. Only in exceptional circumstances, and by prior agreement, may a student be accompanied by someone who is neither a member of the University nor a Students' Union Advisor.
- 1.2 The role of the companion outlined in B.1.1 is not to offer formal representation or speak on the student's behalf, but to offer support and advice to the student.

### 2. Notification of Breach and Initial Review

- 2.1 Any suspected breach of these Regulations must be referred to an AIO of the Host School as soon as reasonably possible.
- 2.2 The AIO shall consider the allegations made together with any information provided to him or her and, in understanding the scope of the case, may review any or all academic work previously submitted by the student during his or her current programme of study.
- 2.3 The AIO shall consult with the CQA Team in the Home Faculty to confirm whether the student has received any previous penalties for Academic Integrity, and the nature of the breach(es), if any.
- 2.4 If there is no record of penalties and the AIO is of the view that a Minor breach of the Regulations has taken place, they shall inform the CQA team in the Host Faculty to notify the person responsible for feedback (e.g. supervisor/marker) as soon as reasonably possible and the CQA team in the Home Faculty so that the matter can be handled as far as is possible as part of the

ordinary feedback process. The CQA team in the Home Faculty shall record that a student has received a warning in the student's files as set out in Section A.

~~In all other circumstances the AIO shall hold an AI meeting with the student as set out below~~

- 2.5 ~~If there is no record of penalties, the proposed penalty falls into the categories of 5.4.1, 5.4.2 and 5.4.3 and the AIO is of the view that this can be managed without the need for a meeting, the AIO has the discretion to offer the student the opportunity to accept the penalty without the need for a meeting.~~
- 2.6 ~~The CQA Team in the Host Faculty shall notify the student of the decision of the AIO (including any proposed penalty) normally within five (5) working days of the breach being identified. As part of the notification, student will be advised of additional sources of support and advice as well as being offered the opportunity to provide a statement to the AIO or request an AI meeting. The notification will be copied to the Module Lead and the student's Personal and Academic Tutor.~~
- 2.7 ~~An AIO must hold an AI meeting if they propose to impose a penalty which would prevent a student's progression through their programme or where the breach falls within the categories of collusion (1.2.3) and External authorship/assistance (1.2.4).~~
- 2.8 ~~Upon receipt of the notification, the student has ten (10) working days in which to respond in one of the following ways:~~
  - 2.8.1 ~~The student accepts the penalty.~~
  - 2.8.2 ~~The student submits a statement describing any context that they wish the AIO to consider when finalising their decision demonstrating insight, reflection and any training/learning undertaken since the breach occurred.~~
  - 2.8.3 ~~The student refuses to accept the penalty or asks to present evidence, that cannot be incorporated into a statement, or prefers to speak directly to the AIO.~~
- 2.9 ~~Where a student accepts the penalty, the CQA Team in the Host Faculty shall notify the student of the decision of the AIO (including any penalty given) normally within five (5) working days. A record of the breach and the penalty will be entered into the student's record.~~
- 2.10 ~~Where a student submits a statement, the CQA Team will ensure that this is considered by the AIO who will review their previous penalty. The AIO will advise the CQA team in the Host Faculty who shall notify the student of the decision of the AIO (including any penalty given) normally within five (5) working days. A record of the breach and the penalty is entered into the student's record and the statement is placed in the student file. The notification must include an overview of the AIO interpretation of the statement and their reflections on the impact.~~
- 2.11 ~~Where a student does not respond to the notification detailed in 2.6 above, the AIO will make a decision based on the information they have received.~~
- 2.12 ~~Where a student refuses to accept the penalty, the AIO shall hold an AI meeting with the student as set out in section 3 below.~~

### 3. AI Meeting

#### 3.1 *Notification and Exchange of Information*

- 3.1.1 The AIO shall request the Host CQA Team to send the student a notification of this meeting and existing evidence which shall be copied to the module lead and the Personal Academic Tutor for their information. The notification will normally be sent within five (5) working days of the allegation being raised.
- 3.1.2 A student shall normally respond within ten (10) working days of the date of the notification providing any information and/or evidence upon which the student intends to rely on at this meeting.
- 3.1.3 Students should confirm their attendance with the CQA team in advance of the meeting.

### 3.2 *Conduct of the Meeting*

- 3.2.1 The meeting shall normally be held within fifteen (15) working days of the date of the notification and will be attended by the student, the student's companion (if any, as set out in section B1) the AIO, and a note taker.
- 3.2.2 This meeting may serve one or more purposes including but not limited to a further investigation or discussion of the suspected breach, mitigation the student wishes to present, or identification of how the student should maintain Academic Integrity in their future academic work and working practices.
- 3.2.3 If a student fails to attend the AI meeting without good reason, the AIO may make a decision on the basis of the available evidence.
- 3.2.4

At the AI meeting, the AIO will describe the purpose of convening the meeting, including the allegations and the evidence to be presented. The student will be given the opportunity to respond and present any evidence of their own. A copy of any written statement to be presented should be made available to the CQA team. The student may confer privately with their companion at any point during the AI meeting.

### 3.3 *Outcome of the AI Meeting*

- 3.3.1 Following the meeting, the AIO may:
  - a. Find there has not been a breach of these Regulations; or
  - b. Find that there has been a breach, and
    - i. subject to B 3.3.3, impose one or more of the penalties listed in Section A 5.4; or
    - ii. request that an Academic Integrity Panel (AI Panel) be convened to determine the penalty; or
  - c. Decide to refer the matter directly to an AI Panel for consideration without making any finding.
- 3.3.2 In all cases the AIO should give reasons for the penalty selected.
- 3.3.3 The CQA Team in the Host Faculty shall notify the student of the decision of the AIO (including any penalty given) normally within five (5) working days of the AI Meeting and request that the CQA team in the Home Faculty record the penalty (if any) in the student's records. A brief summary of the discussion should be retained by the Host Faculty and a copy sent to the student along with the outcome of the discussion, normally within 5 working days of the discussion, with a copy being placed in the student file. Where the student disagrees with the summary, they may submit their own record which will be appended to the notes.
- 3.3.4 An AIO must not impose one or more of the penalties in A 5.4.6, 5.4.7; 5.4.8; 5.4.9; 5.4.10; 5.4.11; 5.4.12. In such cases an AI Panel shall be convened to determine the penalty.

## 4. AI Panel

### 4.1 *Convening an AI Panel*

- 4.1.1 The student may dispute the findings of the AIO and/or the penalty imposed by the AIO **as a result of the AI meeting** and may request the CQA Team in the Host Faculty, in writing, to refer the matter to an AI Panel. The student's written request shall include the reasons for the dispute, indicate the evidence the student intends to rely upon and shall normally be made within five (5) working days of the outcome of the AI Meeting being sent.

- 4.1.2 An AI Panel must also be convened at the request of an AIO (in the circumstances set out in Section B 3.3.1(c); or 3.3.3 above) and the AIO shall provide the CQA team in the Host Faculty with the information necessary for the notification below.

#### 4.2 *Notification and Exchange of Information*

- 4.2.1 The CQA team in the Host Faculty will give the student written notice of the date, time place, and purpose of the AI Panel meeting. The written notice shall also include a summary of the allegations and the basis for those allegations.
- 4.2.2 The AI Panel will be held as soon as reasonably practicable and normally within twenty (20) working days of the date of the notification set out above.
- 4.2.3 At least five (5) working days in advance of the AI Panel meeting, both the student and the University (via the CQA team in the Host Faculty) will supply to one another where appropriate:
- A summary of the information each intends to present to the AI Panel;
  - A copy of any documents or other evidence which each party intends to rely on;
  - A copy of any witness statements; and
  - The names of any witnesses each party intends to call.
- 4.2.4 Students should confirm their attendance (in person or via agreed alternative means) with the CQA team in advance of the meeting.
- 4.2.5 If a student fails to confirm their attendance or attend the AI Panel without good reason, the Panel may make a decision on the basis of the available evidence.

#### 4.3 *Members of and Representatives at the Academic Integrity Panel*

- 4.3.1 The Academic Integrity Panel ("AI Panel") will usually comprise at least three (3) members as follows:
- The Chair: for taught students or taught elements of a programme this shall be the Chair of a Board of Examiners (or nominee) from the Host School and for research students this shall be the Faculty Director of the Graduate School (or nominee) of the student's Host Faculty;
  - An AIO (for taught students or taught elements of a programme) or Faculty Director of the Graduate School (for research students) from a School independent of the case; and
  - A member of academic staff from the Home Faculty.
- 4.3.2 The AI Panel member in 4.3.1(c) must be:
- The Dean or nominee (usually the Associate Dean (Education)) from the Home Faculty if the AIO's advice is that an appropriate penalty could be termination of the programme of study, a recommendation to Senate for the withdrawal of an award, or a reduction in degree classification.
- 4.3.3 The Chair may take advice on specific issues as deemed necessary but must consult with an external examiner of a final thesis, where one is already appointed, before imposing a penalty for cases involving a final thesis.
- 4.3.4 Where a student is following a programme offered jointly with another institution, or an exchange programme or similar, reference should be made to the agreement to confirm the regulations under which the student's case should be pursued and AI Panel members may be varied accordingly.

- 4.3.5 Neither the AIO involved in the AI meeting nor the member of staff responsible for identifying the potential breach will be a member of the AI Panel.
- 4.3.6 The School Representative (normally the AIO) will present the case against the student to the AI Panel. They will not be a member of the AI Panel, and will not be involved in the decision.
- 4.3.7 The student will present their case to the AI Panel.
- 4.3.8 The CQA Team will arrange for a note taker to record a summary of the main points of discussion.

#### 4.4 *The AI Panel Hearing*

- 4.4.1 The duration of an AI Panel will vary from case to case but must be proportionate to the breach alleged to have occurred, the facts in dispute and the number of witnesses (if any) to be called.
- 4.4.2 A student must make every effort to attend an AI Panel. If a student fails to attend without good reason the AI Panel may make a decision based on the available evidence.
- 4.4.3 At the AI Panel, the Chair will describe the purpose of convening the panel. The School Representative will present the allegations and the evidence. The student will be given the opportunity to respond and present any evidence of their own, including presenting witnesses or witness statements. The student's companion may ask questions but should not answer questions on the student's behalf. The student may confer privately with their companion at any time during the AI Panel.
- 4.4.4 The student will be given the opportunity to respond to any information given by a witness. The University may recall witnesses as it sees fit. A student will not normally be permitted to cross-examine witnesses unless, in exceptional circumstances, the Chair decides that a fair hearing could not be held otherwise or if the likely penalty to be imposed by the University is one of termination of the Programme or withdrawal of an award.
- 4.4.5 The student, their companion and the School Representative will then leave the hearing at the same time and the Panel will consider its decision in private.
- 4.4.6 The University may adjourn the AI Panel if further investigations need to be carried out or for additional witnesses to be called or for additional evidence to be obtained. The student will be given a reasonable opportunity to consider any new information obtained before the AI Panel is reconvened.

#### 4.5 *The Outcome from the AI Panel*

- 4.5.1 The AI Panel may:
  - a. Find that there is no breach; or
  - b. Confirm a finding of breach of these Regulations and impose one or more of the penalties in Section A.
- 4.5.2 In all cases the Panel should give reasons for the penalty selected.
- 4.5.3 Where the AI Panel recommends that Senate exercise its powers to withdraw an Award, the Chair shall submit a report to Senate setting out the findings of the AI Panel and the basis for that recommendation.
- 4.5.4 The CQA team in the Host Faculty shall inform the student in writing of the decision by the AI Panel and the reasons for it, normally within five (5) working days of the decision. The letter shall also identify the appeals procedures set out in Section A.
- 4.5.5 The decision of the AI Panel to impose a penalty will be reported to, and recorded by, the Board of Examiners or Faculty Graduate School of the Home Faculty.

*These Regulations Governing Academic Integrity were approved by Senate on the 19 June 2019. They shall come into force at the start of the 2019/20 academic year. Any breaches of Academic Integrity received before the 2019/20 academic year will continue to be dealt with in accordance with the regulations in force at the time the notification of breach was received. Breaches of Academic Integrity may only be dealt with under regulations in force at the start of your programme if you can prove substantial disadvantage.*

*Reviewed in June 2016; no changes made.*

*Reviewed in June 2017; changes approved by Senate on 21 June 2017.*

*Reviewed in May 2018; changes approved by Senate on 20 June 2018.*

*Reviewed in May 2019; changes approved by Senate on 19 June 2019.*

*Reviewed in May 2020; changes to respond to COVID-19 approved by Senate on 26 May 2020.*