

Academic Misconduct Policy - Student

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1. Scope

This policy relates to suspected cases of academic misconduct. Cases relating to student conduct of a non-academic nature are covered by the Student Conduct Policy and Procedure. This policy applies to students who are registered on Leeds Trinity University taught undergraduate and postgraduate programmes, including apprenticeships, recent graduates and students whose registration has been interrupted on a temporary basis.

Further details for students studying at collaborative partners can be found below as well as within the Academic Misconduct Procedure. A separate procedure is in place for Leeds Trinity University students registered on the University of Leeds research degree. Postgraduate research students should consult the Research Student Handbook.

Where there is overlap within a particular case of student conduct and academic misconduct, precise arrangements shall be determined by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor following the principles set out in the respective procedures. These arrangements will be communicated to the student(s) and staff concerned.

This policy will provide a framework for the investigation of breaches of acceptable academic misconduct to ensure that they are treated equitably, without bias and in a fair and transparent manner. It is not intended to be exhaustive, and it is impossible to provide for all conceivable instances of misconduct within this policy. The overall aim of the policy and procedure is to ensure that all students are treated in an equitable manner and that no advantage is provided to students who act without integrity or due diligence in their studies.

The guide is one strand of Leeds Trinity's approach to Academic Integrity and is one which is used at the end of the assessment process. However, even at the point of imposing a penalty for academic misconduct, the underlying aim is to support learning, educate the student on acceptable academic practice and to communicate what is expected of Leeds Trinity University students and graduates.

For students studying at collaborative partners, this policy will apply with the following modifications:

- a. For institutions with Franchised programmes – They will investigate all cases of misconduct with support from the College Liaison Tutors, with serious cases being referred to Student Casework Office. Further information on this process is detailed in Section 4 of the Academic Misconduct Procedure.
- b. For institutions with validated programmes – the partner will adopt this Policy and Procedure and adapt to their own structures.

2. Introduction

Rooted in its Catholic foundation, Leeds Trinity is a diverse and inclusive University welcoming students from all backgrounds and beliefs which exists to provide a transformational educational experience, forming students and learners whose lives will flourish and find wholeness in their work and world (Strategic Plan 2021 – 2026). The University therefore expects its staff and students to act with personal integrity, self-discipline and respect for others in their personal, professional and academic conduct.

Academic Integrity refers to scholarship conducted in an open, honest and responsible manner. All scholarly activity builds upon the work of others and is subject to scrutiny. Students are expected to show respect for the intellectual property of the people who have helped them develop their own ideas by always attributing and acknowledging source material.

Students will be supported in a process of authentic learning and graduates will be able to demonstrate independent thought and analysis which enables the University to uphold the academic standards of its awards and the value of its degrees. It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that their work conforms to academic integrity.

This policy and its associated procedure explain how the University undertakes its responsibility to investigate academic misconduct and provides guidance to all students.

The University is committed to promoting an open and diverse community where the rights and dignity of all are respected regardless of their background. This is reflected in the University's [mission, vision and values](#) and our [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy](#).

The Policy and its associated Procedure have been developed in accordance with the QAA's [Quality Code](#), the Office of the Independent Adjudicator's Good Practice Framework for [Disciplinary Procedures](#) and the [Office for Student's Conditions of Registration](#).

3. Definitions

Academic Misconduct encompasses all kinds of academic dishonesty, whether deliberate or unintentional, which infringes the integrity of the University's assessment procedures. Below is a list of the most common forms of academic misconduct, however, this list is not exhaustive, and occurrences of other types of suspected misconduct may be investigated under these procedures.

Poor Scholarship

Poor Scholarship is characterised as limited or inadequate technical skills or adherence to academic conventions, whether through negligence or lack of understanding. It is a student's responsibility to ensure that they fully understand the academic conventions described in programme material, such as appropriate referencing system and use of quotation marks and make use of the support that is available. Failure to properly attribute the work of others may be regarded as plagiarism.

Self-Plagiarism

Work submitted for each assessment must be a new, original piece of work produced specifically for the assignment. Any repurposing of a student's own material must be explicitly acknowledged and referenced and must show how ideas or concepts have been developed in the new work. Reproducing passages verbatim should be avoided and any self-citations should be clearly identified. Failure to do so will be regarded as an attempt to mislead the examiner and will not be considered when marking the assessment. If the student is required to revise and resubmit an assignment for a resit attempt, this would not be classed as self-plagiarism and should not be reported as a case of misconduct.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a form of cheating which involves presenting another person's ideas or expressions without acknowledging the source. By not referencing the source properly, paraphrasing it without acknowledgement or by omitting the reference, the true origin of the material is hidden from the marker. Any work submitted for assessment, unless collaborative work has been specifically permitted in the assignment guidelines, must be the individual student's own work. All passages quoted must be in quotation marks, and as such, quotations and any passages which are paraphrased must be properly attributed to the author(s). The University provides clear guidance on academic writing skills and ignorance on the part of the student will not be accepted as a defence in a case of plagiarism. Plagiarism may take the

form of direct copying (verbatim), reproducing or paraphrasing ideas, sentences, drawings, or graphs, as well as material from the internet or any other source and submitting them without appropriate acknowledgement. Plagiarism can also relate to work submitted in another language, which relates to copying the translated material, copying and rearranging the material as well as taking ideas and findings without proper attribution. The use of word spinners is also considered plagiarism.

Contract Cheating/Commissioning and AI

Contract cheating is where a student either commissions a third party, for example an essay mill or friend or family member or uses Artificial Intelligence to complete an assignment for them to submit as their own work when they are not authorised to do so. This is not an exhaustive list. Students who commission or purchase work or uses AI to complete their work which they then present as their own, will be considered as breaching the Academic Regulations. Unless you are explicitly informed that you are permitted to use AI in your module handbook, use of AI is a breach of the Academic Misconduct Policy. Any student who offers to commission or completes work for other students, either at the University or Partner Institutes will be investigated under this category of misconduct as this is a breach of the regulations.

Collusion

Students who take part in unauthorised or illicit collaboration with others will be regarded as having colluded regardless of whether any advantage was gained or enabled for any parties involved. If students collaborate on a group assignment as determined by the Assessment Brief, this would not be considered collusion. It undermines the academic integrity of assessments that are designed to test an individual student's abilities and understanding. Students may not lend work which has been submitted for an assessment to another student. This includes former students. Students should treat their work as their own academic property, and it is a student's responsibility to protect their own work. Students should also ensure that electronic copies of their work are stored securely and cannot be copied or stolen by another person. Sanctions will normally be applied to all students involved in cases of collusion.

Fabrication and falsification

Any student found to have made up data or other such content, or to have manipulated content or tampered with documentation will be regarded as having fabricated/falsified material. This includes the content of work submitted for assessment and records or documentation associated with academic progress, such as entry statements or qualifications, false claims for exemption or mitigating, misrepresentation of a word count, falsifying references or contribution to a group assessment.

Research Misconduct

All research which contributes to the assessment of taught programmes must be conducted in an ethical and responsible manner. This includes requirements to secure ethical approval prior to the commencement of primary research, the conduct of the research, the relationship and dealings with participants and proper handling of data. Research Integrity is considered in cases of research misconduct and refers to data collection and secondary research (e.g., Literature Reviews) conducted in an open, honest and responsible manner.

Impersonation

Any student found to be assuming the identity of a third party or where a student is impersonated by another person, to gain or enable access or advantage will be deemed guilty of impersonation.

Cheating in an examination

Any breach of the examination procedure which compromises the integrity of the assessment will be regarded as academic misconduct, irrespective of whether any advantage was gained or there was any intention to do so. These principles apply equally to formal examinations and to all laboratory and class tests conducted under exam conditions, including online exams. Should a student require their own room, this must be detailed in their Student Inclusion Plan and discussed with the Assessment Team.

Breaches include but are not limited to the following:

- Obtaining or seeking to obtain examination papers prior to the examination unless the paper has been provided as a 'seen' examination.
- Copying from another candidate or from any unauthorised material, including by use of an electrical device.
- Taking additional materials into the examination unless prior approval has been given.
- Communicating or attempting to communicate with other candidates or with any person(s) except the invigilator, including by use of an electrical device.
- Any form of disruptive behaviour.
- Not following the instructions given by the examination invigilator. Examples of this include Bringing unauthorised notes into the exam room, having annotations for a clean book exam, not putting a mobile phone on silent and in the candidate's bag at the beginning of the exam, being disruptive to other candidates after candidate has been asked to remain quiet.
- The removal of any material from the examination room other than items which were brought into the room by the candidate or the question paper, where permitted. Exam papers should not be taken out of the exam room.

4. Monitoring and Enhancement.

During the investigation of cases, the Chair of the Assessment Panel or the University's Student Academic Misconduct Panel may identify actions that would contribute to the enhancement of the overall student experience. The APM Panel may, at its discretion, report to the Head of School and ask for a response on the matter to be submitted to the Director of Academic Quality and Standards.

The Academic Quality and Standards Committee receives an annual report of cases, including data on student characteristics for the purposes of assessing the impact on students with the protected characteristics described in the Equality Act. The Committee provides oversight of the operation of the Student Academic Misconduct Panel has responsibility for the policy and procedure.

Collaborative partners should keep a record of all cases conducted under their application of the procedure.

5. Guidance Notes on Case Handling

Underlying principles for the investigation of misconduct

The University has a duty to act fairly when investigating misconduct. Four basic principles should be adhered to:

- The right of reply – the student should be given the opportunity to put their case forward and be heard. The result of this is that the student should be given as much detail as possible about the conduct of an investigatory interview, particularly if it involves a viva

voce inquiry (See section 5 in Procedure) or Student Academic Misconduct Panel meeting in advance and be allowed sufficient time to prepare for the meeting.

- Investigations should operate without bias and be transparent – the investigatory interview must be overseen by an independent member of staff, normally the Chair of the Assessment Panel (or nominee). Investigations that may have more serious consequences will be referred to the University's Student Academic Misconduct Panel where all Panel members are independent of the relevant subject area.
- Decisions must be based on evidence – the outcome of an investigation should be based on a balanced and considered assessment of the information and evidence presented and should not be speculative.
- A test of reasonableness in decision making – outcomes should be proportionate to any offence that is found and should be drawn from a reasonable range of options to ensure equity of treatment and consistency.

Due to the complex nature of scholarship and academic writing, decisions will inevitably involve an element of academic judgement. Outcomes will be decided on the balance of probabilities i.e., that the proposition is more likely to be true than not true. Further information on this requirement can be found in the Office of the Independent Adjudicators [Good Practice Framework: Disciplinary procedures](#).

The finding of whether misconduct has occurred is separate from the application of a penalty. Whilst the former should be based on the facts contained in all the evidence under consideration and may be academic judgement, the application of a penalty is a matter of procedural fairness where extraneous factors can be taken into consideration in order to reach a fair outcome.

Advice on previous case law and further guidance on the nature of a case is available from the Student Casework Office.

6. Student Support

1. Students and staff can obtain advice on the interpretation and operation of the procedure from the Student Casework Office.
2. Advice and support on the completion of the Academic Misconduct Form can be obtained from Student Support (studentsupport@leedstrinity.ac.uk) and/or Leeds Trinity Students' Union.
3. Student Support Services are available for students studying at the Leeds City Centre or Horsforth campus and can be accessed and booked via the MyLTU App or via email at studentsupport@leedstrinity.ac.uk.
4. Students studying at Collaborative Partners will need to contact their own institutions for support and guidance.
5. There is no entitlement to legal representation at any stage in the process.

7. Student record, transfer of programmes and providing references

Instances of poor scholarship and academic misconduct are recorded on the student's record. On e: Vision, it will be detailed if a student has had a previous offence of academic misconduct and a central database up to March 2026 is maintained by the Student Casework Office. Colleagues may obtain advice on caselaw from the Student Casework Office.

The data collected informs an annual report to the Academic Quality and Standards Committee to provide institutional oversight of the policy and procedure.

Where a student requests to transfer to a different programme of study, the Head of School should consider any recorded instances of misconduct which need to be considered, so that

the student may be advised accordingly on the implications for study on the new programme. Advice on individual cases may be obtained from the Student Casework Office.

In providing a reference on behalf of Leeds Trinity University, a referee has a duty of care to the subject of the reference, to the recipient of the reference and to the University. References should be true, accurate and fair and not misleading overall. Matters relating to student conduct should be regarded as an internal matter and should not normally be included in a reference to a potential employer unless the matter was directly relevant to the duty of care owed to the recipient of the reference. Colleagues should contact the Student Casework Office for information on misconduct offences

8. Proof-Reading and Translation Services

It is a student's responsibility as the author of their work to proof-read and edit their own work, however, this should be limited to checking for errors in format and grammar. Any assistance from a third party, whether a professional service or a friend, family or fellow student may be regarded as contract cheating. Students are encouraged to seek advice on academic writing skills from tutors and the Learning Hub, although it is emphasised that this support does not extend to proof-reading.

The use of translation services involving a third party is expressly forbidden and will be regarded as contract cheating. The use of translation software is permitted, although students should be aware of its limitations as it is unable to take context into consideration and meaning can be lost. English language entry requirements are designed to ensure that students are equipped with the language skills to enable them to submit work for assessment in English and additional language support is available. It is the student's responsibility to seek support through the appropriate channels should it be required.

Special dispensation to the rules on contract cheating and use of writing services may be provided to students who are registered with a disability and who have a specific requirement agreed with the Dyslexia and Disability Support Services and identified within their Student Inclusion Plan (SIP).

9. Procedure

The policy is affected by appropriate procedures and guidance which are reviewed and signed off by the relevant policyholder annually, for example:

- a. Academic Misconduct Procedure
- b. Student Code of Conduct