

# Student Academic Misconduct Policy

## A Scope

- A1 This guidance relates to suspected cases of student academic misconduct. Matters pertaining to student conduct of a non-academic nature are covered by the Student Conduct and Discipline Code. Cases relating to Post Graduate Research Misconduct are not considered under this procedure.
- A2 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. Such arrangements will be communicated to the student(s) and staff concerned.
- A3 These procedures will provide a framework for the investigation of breaches of acceptable academic conduct 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 such a procedure. 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.
- A4 The guide is one strand of Leeds Trinity's approach to Academic Integrity and is one which is invoked at the end of the assessment process. However, even at the point of imposing a penalty for misconduct, the underlying aim is to support learning and educate the student on acceptable academic practice and to communicate what is expected of Leeds Trinity University students and graduates.

## B Definitions

### B1. Academic Integrity

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.

Leeds Trinity University 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.

## **B2 Academic Misconduct**

Academic Misconduct encompasses all kinds of academic dishonesty, whether deliberate or unintentional, which infringes the integrity of the University's assessment procedures. Any suspected instance of misconduct will be investigated following the procedures in section C below. 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.

### B2.1 Poor Scholarship<sup>1</sup>

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.

### B2.2 Reuse of material/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.

### B2.3 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.

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<sup>1</sup> Also see section F.3 – Guidance Notes on Case Handling B2.1

#### B2.4 Contract Cheating/Commissioning<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> to complete an assignment for them to submit as their own work. 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 by your Module Tutor to use AI, 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.

#### B2.5 Collusion<sup>4</sup>

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. Collusion 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.

#### B2.6 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.

In some cases, fabricated/falsified material may also be deemed to be professional misconduct, for example in relation to teaching or journalism. For further information, please see the Professional

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<sup>2</sup> The Process of undertaking Viva Voces is in F5

<sup>3</sup> Generative Artificial Intelligence are online tools which can generate data, texts, images, coding and sounds. Both Staff and Students should be aware of the University's position of the use of AI. Further information for Staff can be found via the CELT Intranet Page or from the Academic Partnership Unit. Students should discuss this with their Module/Personal Tutors.

<sup>4</sup> Also see section F.4 – Guidance Notes on Case Handling

Misconduct [Policy](#).

**B2.7 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.

**B2.8 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.

**B2.9 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. 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.
- 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.

**c Procedures for investigating suspected cases**

**C1 Procedure for the investigation of poor academic practice and suspected minor instances of academic misconduct**

The following procedure applies to poor academic practice and suspected minor instances of academic misconduct where errors of presentation or methodology are likely to be due to inexperience and lack of understanding of the required academic conventions for students in the early stages of their

academic career. Instances of this nature are identified and resolved by the marker via the marking and feedback process.

The Academic Quality Office will keep a record of all cases on campus. At Partners, it is the Partner's responsibility to ensure that they monitor the number of offences for students, so that any future incident can be identified at the appropriate level of seriousness.

C1.1 Where a marker discovers **re-use of a student's own work (self-plagiarism)** verbatim without any reference to the previous body of work and they judge that this would result in the double counting of material credit without proper intellectual development of work, they will forward the case to the Chair of the Assessment Panel (or nominee) to consider the case, within 5 working days. If it is agreed by the Chair of the Assessment Panel (or nominee) that it is a case of self-plagiarism, the marker will discount any copied sections and mark the remainder of the work. Markers will give advice and the reason for the mark awarded and guidance on the proper academic conventions in the written assessment feedback. The incident shall be recorded on the student record system by the Assessment Team.

C1.2 Where a marker identifies **poor scholarship**, they will forward the case to the Chair of the Assessment Panel (or nominee) to consider the case within 5 working days.

If it is agreed by the Chair of the Assessment Panel (or nominee) that it is a case of poor scholarship, the marker will discount any copied sections and mark the remainder of the work. Direct advice on the reasons for the mark awarded and on the correct academic conventions should be clearly indicated in the written feedback to the student. Instances of poor scholarship should be recorded on the student record system by the Assessment Team.

C1.3 Where a marker identifies an occurrence of **minor misconduct**, they will forward the case to the Chair of the Assessment Panel (or nominee) within 5 working days.

If it is agreed by the Chair of the Assessment Panel (or nominee) that it is a case of minor misconduct, the relevant penalty will be applied as detailed in the penalty table. Direct advice regarding referencing and the required academic conventions will be given in the written assessment feedback and the student will be required to undertake an academic integrity tutorial. For students studying at Partner Institutions, they will be required to undertake an Academic Integrity Tutorial facilitated by their institute. The incident should be recorded on the student record by the Assessment Team.

C1.4 In all of the above cases, the marker may request that the assignment

is investigated by the Chair of the Assessment Panel, or nominee, where they have some uncertainty or concerns.

## **C2 Procedure for the investigation of suspected moderate and serious instances of academic misconduct in relation to work submitted for assessment**

The following procedure applies to the investigation of all suspected moderate and serious instances of academic misconduct and is conducted by the marker and Chair of the relevant Assessment Panel (or nominee). Where, following investigation, the work is judged to contain moderate levels of academic misconduct, a conclusion may be drawn at the end of the interview with the student. Serious cases will be referred to the University's Student Academic and Professional Misconduct Panel.

- C2.1 Where a marker suspects academic misconduct to have occurred in an assignment, other than the instances referred to in section C1, they will set out the case in writing on the Academic Misconduct (AM) report form, assemble the evidence and formally refer it to the relevant Chair of the Assessment Panel (or nominee). This should be done within 5 working days of a marker suspecting a case of misconduct.<sup>5</sup>The evidence may include, but should not rest solely on, a Turnitin Originality Report as the report simply identifies matched text and is not necessarily an indication that the material has been used improperly. The student submission and all source material should be highlighted and indexed so that the sections of the work in question and corresponding sources are visibly clear to someone who is unfamiliar with the content.
- C2.2 Upon receipt of a referral, the Chair of the Assessment Panel (or nominee), in consultation with the marker as necessary, will satisfy themselves that there is a clear and convincing case to answer by examining the evidence provided by the marker. Using the penalty table as a guide, they will determine whether the case is one of poor scholarship or whether the case requires further investigation as an occurrence of academic misconduct.
- C2.3 If it is determined that the writing practice amounts to poor scholarship or minor misconduct, the Chair of the Assessment Panel and marker should follow the process as detailed in section C1.1, C.1.2 or C1.3 as required.
- C2.4 If there is a case to answer, the student will be provided with assessment feedback, advised that their work has been identified as a case of potential misconduct and that they will be invited to an investigatory interview. Students will be expected to make themselves

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<sup>5</sup> If anonymous marking is applied, this needs to be done within 5 working days of marks being released.

available for an investigatory interview provided that 5 working days' notice of the meeting has been provided. The student should be invited no later than 10 working days after the case has been reported to the Chair of the Assessment Panel or nominee. At the interview, the Chair of the Assessment Panel (or nominee) will provide the student with details of the allegation and supporting evidence in advance of the meeting. The invite to the meeting should be sent to the student's LTU email address. The marker or other member of academic staff familiar with the requirements of the assessment will attend the meeting and the student may be accompanied by a companion if they choose. This can be a companion, fellow LTU student or an officer of LTSU. If the Chair or nominee is also the marker, then another member of academic staff from the programme team will be asked to attend.

C2.5 Wherever possible, the meetings should be held during term-time. However, if the meeting cannot be arranged in term-time, a suitable date should be arranged in consultation with the student<sup>6</sup>. Students are expected to make all reasonable efforts to attend such meetings and the rearrangement of meetings will normally be limited to one occasion. Should the student not attend the meeting or fail to respond to the correspondence about the meeting, then provided the criteria has been met, the Chair of the Assessment Panel (or nominee) may make a judgement on the work in the student's absence. The investigatory interviews can take place in person or online.

C2.6 The University recognises its duty to make reasonable adjustments to the meeting process for students who may require it. Staff should consider if a student has a disability or a Student Inclusion Plan and if any reasonable adjustments are required. Students are to inform the Chair of the Assessment Panel (or nominee) of any reasonable adjustments that may need to be considered when conducting the interview.

C2.7 At the meeting, the Chair of the Assessment Panel (or nominee) and marker will:

- (i) Show the work and sources to the student and explain how the identified passages appear to be in breach of acceptable conduct.
- (ii) Ask the student for an account of how the work was produced.
- (iii) Attempt to gain an understanding that the student is aware of the dangers of working in this way and how similar allegations might be avoided in the future.
- (iv) Ascertain from the student whether there were any mitigating circumstances<sup>7</sup>.
- (v) Make notes of the meeting, to inform completion of the AM report form and the notes may be required for any subsequent appeal.

C2.8 If it is agreed that there is not a case to be answered or is classified as a minor offence, as defined in the table of penalties, the Chair of the

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<sup>6</sup> Where a decision on a case cannot be reached within the current academic year, student registration would remain as provisional until the case is resolved. Students should be alerted of this and any consequences in terms of progression to the next level, if appropriate.

<sup>7</sup> If mitigating circumstances are considered when deciding upon an appropriate penalty, they must be supported by independent evidence.

Assessment Panel (or nominee) will inform the student of the penalty to be applied. The student will be given advice regarding referencing and the required academic conventions. They will also be required to undertake an academic integrity tutorial. For students studying at Partner Institutions, they will be required to undertake an Academic Integrity Tutorial facilitated by their institute.

C2.9 If a case of moderate academic misconduct has been substantiated, the Chair of the Assessment Panel (or nominee) and marker will determine the penalty, using the penalty table. The Chair of the Assessment Panel (or nominee) will report the case on the AM form, normally within 5 working days of the meeting, to the student, Academic Quality Office and the Assessment Team. If the student is studying at a Partner institution, this will be done in consultation with the appropriate member of LTU Staff.

C2.10 In the case of moderate academic misconduct being substantiated, the Chair of the Assessment Panel (or nominee) and marker will:

- (i) Explain to the student that they are being given the relevant penalty, which will be confirmed in writing via the AM report form via the assessment team and that any further allegations may be regarded as a serious offence, for which the consequences will be much more severe and may result in expulsion from the University.
- (ii) Explain the penalty to the student.
- (iii) Ask the student to confirm that they understand how they have breached the requisite academic conventions and that they will take all necessary steps to ensure that they do not do so again.
- (iv) Inform the student that they will be required to undertake an academic integrity tutorial and remind them of the support that is available to them.
- (v) Advise the student of their right of appeal.

C2.11 If, at the end of the interview, the Chair of the Assessment Panel (or nominee) and marker decide that the case is of a serious or complex nature, they shall refer the case to the University's Student Academic and Professional Misconduct Panel, using the AM report form. The case will then be considered under the procedure set out in section C5.

C2.12 If the student is studying at a Partner institution, C2.10 and C2.11 will be done in consultation with the appropriate member of LTU staff.

C2.13 For moderate misconduct, if the student has admitted to an offence of academic misconduct and has accepted that a penalty will be invoked, they will be advised that it will be considered the matter to be closed and it will not be referred to an APM Panel. All cases of serious misconduct should be referred to an APM Panel.

C2.14 Exceptionally, an alleged offence of Academic Misconduct may come to light after a Progression and Award Board has met and confirmed results have been published. In such cases, the marker/academic should refer the case directly to the Chair of the Assessment Panel (or

nominee), who will consult with the Academic Quality Office. The case will then be referred to the Chair of the Progression and Award Board to consider the seriousness of the offence, the time which has elapsed since the alleged offence was committed, the reason as to why it was not discovered earlier and the regulations in relation to PSRBs (if applicable) in determining whether or not to proceed with the case. The Chair of the Progression and Award Board (PAB) must agree to the case being pursued before a student is contacted.

C2.15 If it is agreed that a case is to be brought forward, the marker and the Chair of the Assessment Panel (or nominee) will follow the above process as detailed in C2.4 – C2.12. If it is determined it is a case of minor or moderate misconduct, the relevant penalty will be applied as detailed in the Table of Penalties. If it is determined that it is a case of severe misconduct, it will be referred to an APM Panel as detailed in section C5.

### **C3 Procedure for the investigation of other forms of suspected moderate and serious instances of academic misconduct**

The following procedure applies to the investigation of suspected moderate and serious instances of academic misconduct that take place outside of the assessment process and are not covered by the procedure in section C2.

C3.1 Where a tutor discovers academic misconduct outside of the marking process, such as an attempt of fabrication/falsification of official documentation, they will report it to the Chair of the Assessment Panel (or nominee). The Chair of the Assessment Panel (or nominee) will prepare a case and refer it to the Academic and Professional Misconduct (APM) Panel. An investigatory interview may be held as part of the collation of appropriate evidence, following the principles set out in C2.6 – C2.12. The case will be considered under the procedure set out in section C5, if considered a serious offence.

### **C4 Procedure for the investigation of suspected cheating in an examination**

The following procedure applies to all forms of offences in breach of the examination procedure and relates to formal examinations and to all laboratory and class tests conducted under exam conditions, including online exams. In some cases, it may be more applicable for a case to be investigated under the Student Conduct and Discipline Code. Colleagues should discuss the potential case of conduct with the Academic Quality Office.

C4.1 Where an invigilator of an examination suspects that a candidate is in breach of the examination procedure or is employing unfair practices in order to gain an advantage, they will make a note on the candidates

answer book at the point at which the suspected cheating occurred and confiscate any unauthorised materials/devices. If the suspected incident involves more than one candidate, notes will be made on both answer books. The answer books will then be removed and the students will be given new ones.

- C4.2 The student(s) will be informed that the matter will be reported to the Head of Student Records and Academic Timetabling and will be allowed to continue with the examination, unless the offence is one of disruptive behaviour which places other candidates at a disadvantage or is one of impersonation. For Partners, the case should be reported to the Chair of the Assessment Panel.
- C4.3 Following consultation with the Head of Student Records and Academic Timetabling, or nominee or Chair of the Assessment Panel (Partners) the invigilator/Student Records /Chair of the Assessment Panel may take any other reasonable steps necessary in order to secure evidence for the case, for example photographic evidence.
- C4.4 At the end of the examination, the invigilator will write a report of the incident and submit it to Student Records along with the answer book and any materials/devices confiscated from the candidate(s), which may need to be retained until after the investigation has been completed. This should be done within 5 working days of the exam taking place. The case will be referred to the Chair of the Assessment Panel (or nominee) and the Academic Quality Office.
- C4.5 The Chair of the Assessment panel (or nominee) will write to the student and explain what will happen next within 5 working days.
- C4.6 The Chair of the Assessment Panel (or nominee) shall take any further steps necessary to assemble the case and refer it to the University's APM Panel if required. The case will be considered under the procedure set out in C5 if it is considered a serious case of misconduct. If it is considered a case of minor or moderate misconduct, the case will be considered under procedures set out in C.1 and C.2
- C4.7 Colleagues should ensure that they include invigilation notes or report and keep a record of staff invigilated the exam. These should be included with the Academic Misconduct Report Form.

## **C5 Procedures for cases to be heard by the University's Student Academic and Professional Misconduct Panel**

The following procedure applies to serious instances of academic misconduct which have been investigated at local level under the procedures described in sections C2, C3 and C4 and referred to the University's Student Academic Misconduct Panel. The below applies to students studying at LTU and UK Partners. Students studying at TNE Partners will follow the process as detailed

in C5.14 – C5.21.

C5.1 Cases of academic misconduct to be considered by the University's Student Academic and Professional Misconduct Panel shall be submitted to the Director of Academic Quality and Standards or nominee, Cases shall normally be submitted on the AM report form, along with supporting evidence and will indicate the outcome of local-level consideration of the case to date.

C5.2 If the student has admitted to an offence of academic misconduct, they may be offered the option of accepting a penalty, determined by the Chair of the APM Panel, without need for a full hearing, thus avoiding undue prolongation or escalation on procedural grounds alone. Students must be asked this at Departmental Investigatory Interviews. Should the student choose not to accept the penalty, then a meeting of the APM Panel will be convened.

C5.3 If it is determined that a meeting of the APM Panel is to be convened, it will be arranged within 15 working days of the case being referred to AQO. It will have the following membership:

- One Head of School, or nominee, nominated by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, from a subject area independent of the case to be heard (Chair)
- One senior member of lecturing staff from a subject area independent of the case to be heard
- The Director of Academic Quality and Standards, or nominee
- Leeds Trinity Students' Union (LTSU) President or Officer will be invited to sit in attendance
- Relevant Partner Colleague or nominee/CLT if applicable

C5.4 Other persons permitted to be present at the meeting are:

- The student
- If the student chooses, they may be accompanied by a companion, fellow LTU student or a member of LTSU.
- The departmental representative to present the case, normally the marker or Chair of the Assessment Panel (or nominee)/College Liaison Tutor (as appropriate)
- A member of the Academic Quality Office (secretary)
- Any other relevant third party as determined by the Chair of the APM Panel. The student will be notified of any such party who has been invited to attend.

C5.5 The University recognises its duty to make reasonable adjustments to the panel hearing for students who may require it. Students are to inform the Chair of the APM Panel Hearing and AQO of any reasonable adjustments that may need to be considered when conducting the Panel Hearing.

C5.6 On behalf of the APM Panel, the Academic Quality Office shall:

- (i) Arrange the time and venue for the meeting, in consultation with the panel members and nominated departmental representative. If the meeting cannot be arranged in term-time, a suitable date shall be arranged in consultation with the student<sup>8</sup>. Students are expected to make all reasonable efforts to attend such meetings and the re-arrangement of meetings will normally be limited to

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<sup>8</sup> Where the decision of an APM Panel has not been resolved within the current academic year, student registration would remain as provisional until the case was resolved. Students should be alerted to this and any consequences in terms of progression to the next level, if appropriate.

one occasion. However, the student will be encouraged to attend in person and will be advised that it is in their best interest to do so. The APM Panel can take place in person or online.

- (ii) Write to the student requiring them to attend the meeting, provide them with details of the allegation and the information to be considered by the APM Panel. It is the student's responsibility to make any necessary arrangements with the Students' Union. The student will be advised that they can submit a written statement to read out at the Panel.
- (iii) Take a record of the meeting.

C5.7 At the hearing, the APM Panel will hold a private, preliminary meeting and then the hearing will be an open meeting with the student (and companion where applicable) and departmental representative present throughout the inquiry section of the meeting, unless there has been prior arrangement by the Director of Academic Quality and Standards, or nominee to operate otherwise. The student (and companion where applicable) and departmental representative will withdraw and the Panel will draw its conclusions in private. The student (and companion where applicable) will be invited to return to the Meeting to receive the panel's decision. The student will formally be informed of the outcome of the panel within 10 working days in writing.

C5.8 Should the student not attend the meeting or fail to respond to the correspondence about the meeting arrangements then, provided that the criteria in C5.6 above have been met, the APM Panel will hear the case in the student's absence.

C5.9 During the consideration of the case at the meeting:

- (i) The APM panel will discuss all relevant documentation submitted as evidence to the Panel in a closed preliminary meeting to establish its lines of enquiry.
- (ii) The student (and their companion where applicable) and the departmental representative will join the Panel and the Chair of the APM Panel will provide an outline of the proceedings.
- (iii) The Chair will invite the departmental representative to introduce the case and Panel Members will ask questions to obtain a clear understanding of the allegation.
- (iv) The Chair will invite the student to explain their working methods and/or actions and Panel Members will ask questions to obtain a clear understanding of the circumstances.
- (v) Where a third party has been invited to provide advice to the Panel, the Chair will invite comment at appropriate junctures.
- (vi) The student and departmental representative will each be given the opportunity to ask questions via the Chair at appropriate points in the proceedings.
- (vii) The departmental representative and student will be invited to make a concluding statement in turn.
- (viii) The student (and companion where applicable) and departmental representative will withdraw while the Panel draws its conclusions.
- (ix) The student (and companion where applicable) will be invited to return to the meeting to receive the Panel's decision.
- (x) The departmental representative and Chair of the Assessment Panel (or nominee) (if different) will normally be informed of the Panel's decision by the Secretary within 10 working days.

C5.10 The APM Panel may take any other steps as may be considered necessary in order to give the case due consideration.

- C5.11 If the case is not upheld or is classified as a minor offence of academic misconduct, the Secretary will inform the student, in writing, within 10 working days, that the recommended penalty will be applied, as detailed in the penalty table.
- C5.12 If the APM Panel decides that a case of moderate or serious academic misconduct has been substantiated, it shall consider the student's record, including profile of marks and previously substantiated allegations of academic misconduct when determining a penalty. The penalty will normally be one of the penalties listed in the Table of Penalties although the APM Panel has the authority to impose any other penalty that it deems appropriate to the individual circumstances of the case. If a penalty is agreed where it would result in the cancellation of a student's registration with the University, the Panel will refer this to the Dean of the relevant Faculty/relevant Partner Institute nominee for approval.
- C5.13 The formal record of the meeting will be checked and signed by the Chair of the APM Panel and will accompany the outcome letter to the student, normally within 10 working days of the meeting. Copies of the records will be held in the Academic Quality Office and the outcome of the hearing will be stored on a centrally held database to facilitate consistency in the application of penalties in future cases.
- C5.14 For TNE students, if it is determined that a meeting of the APM Panel is to be convened, it will be arranged within 15 working days of the case being referred to the Chair of the APM Panel, in consultation with the relevant member of LTU staff. It will have the following membership:
- Chair (From the Partner institution, usually independent from the student and will have no prior knowledge of the case). Chairs will be approved by LTU.
  - Module Tutor from the Partner institution.
  - LTU Representative.
- C5.15 The student may be accompanied by a companion. A Panel Member will also take notes of the hearing or an LTU AQO representative can attend to act as secretary.
- C5.16 On behalf of the APM Panel, the Chair shall:
- (i) Arrange the time and venue for the meeting, in consultation with the panel members. If the meeting cannot be arranged in term-time, a suitable date shall be arranged in consultation with the student<sup>9</sup>. Students are expected to make all reasonable efforts to attend such meetings and the re-arrangement of meetings will normally be limited to one occasion. However, the student will be encouraged to attend in person and will be advised that it is in their best interest to do so. The panel can take place in person or online, though it is advised that the student, Chair and Module Tutor attend the meeting in person (if possible) whilst the LTU representative joins the meeting virtually.
  - (ii) Write to the student requiring them to attend the meeting, provide them with

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<sup>9</sup> Where the decision of an APM Panel has not been resolved within the current academic year, student registration would remain as provisional until the case was resolved. Students should be alerted to this and any consequences in terms of progression to the next level, if appropriate.

details of the allegation and the information to be considered by the APM Panel.

- C5.17 C5.11. TNE Partners should follow the policy as detailed in C5.8 to C5.11.
- C5.18 If the case is not upheld or is classified as a minor offence of academic misconduct, the Chair will inform the student, in writing, within 10 working days, that the recommended penalty will be applied, as detailed in the penalty table.
- C5.19 If the APM Panel decides that a case of moderate or serious academic misconduct has been substantiated, it shall consider the student's record, including profile of marks and previously substantiated allegations of academic misconduct when determining a penalty. The penalty will normally be one of the penalties listed in the Table of Penalties although the APM Panel has the authority to impose any other penalty that it deems appropriate to the individual circumstances of the case. If a penalty is agreed where it would result in the cancellation of a student's registration, the Panel will need to refer this to the Dean of the relevant Faculty for approval.
- C5.20 The formal record of the meeting will be checked and signed by the Chair of the APM Panel and will accompany the outcome letter to the student, normally within 10 working days of the meeting. The Partner will need to include the appropriate member of LTU Staff into their email, informing the student of the outcome.

## D Appeals Procedure

- D1 A student who is found guilty of academic or professional misconduct may appeal against the decision of the relevant panel only on the following grounds:
- (i) New evidence of special circumstances which the student could not have presented previously.
  - (ii) A material procedural irregularity in the conduct of the case.
- D2 An appeal will only be considered if it is submitted in writing to the Deputy Vice- Chancellor at [misconduct@leedstrinity.ac.uk](mailto:misconduct@leedstrinity.ac.uk) within **10 working days** of the date of the notification to the student of the outcome of the investigation. Any appeal must state the grounds for the appeal and must be supported by appropriate evidence.
- D3 On receipt of an appeal, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor shall determine whether there are grounds for an appeal to proceed. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor may commission an independent investigation by a Head of School or other senior member of staff not directly associated with either the programme of study on which the student concerned is registered or the student's case to date.

- D4 The Deputy Vice-Chancellor will consider the appeal/investigatory report if applicable and decide as to whether the appeal should be upheld or dismissed.
- D5 The Deputy Vice-Chancellor will communicate the outcome of the appeal to the student, the Chair of the relevant panel as soon as possible after the investigation has been completed.
- D6 The decision of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor shall be final and a “Completion of Procedures” Letter will be issued with the outcome of the appeal.
- D7 If, on exhaustion of the University’s internal procedures detailed above, a student wishes to seek an independent external review, then they should submit a complaint to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) within 12 months of the date on the “Completion of Procedures” Letter. The Completion of Procedures Letter will contain information on the services provided by the OIA and on how to apply.

## **E Monitoring and Enhancement**

- E1 During the investigation of cases, the Chair of the Assessment Panel or University’s Student Academic and Professional Misconduct Panel may identify actions that would contribute to the enhancement of the overall student experience. Actions identified by the APM Panel will be reported to the Chair of the Assessment Panel whose responsibility it is to take them forward. 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.
- E2 The outcomes of individual cases are reported to the Progression and Award Board so that the results can be included in its decisions on progression and award.
- E3 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 and Professional Misconduct Panel and has responsibility for the policy and procedure.

## **F Guidance Notes on Case Handling**

### **F1 Underlying principles for the investigation of misconduct**

- F1.1 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 F5) or Student Academic and Professional 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 and Professional 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.

F1.2 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.

F1.3 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.

F1.4 Advice on previous case law and further guidance on the nature of a case is available from the Academic Quality Office and the Chair of the Student Academic and Professional Misconduct Panel (APM Panel).

## **F2 Student Support**

F2.1 If a student receives an allegation of Academic Misconduct, they can contact Leeds Trinity Students' Union for advice and support. As detailed in C2.4 and C5.5, a LTSU officer can accompany a student to an investigatory interview or panel hearing as a companion. However, students must represent themselves and an SU Officer or companion is not able to act as a formal advocate. Students can also contact their Personal Tutor for support. If a student's Personal Tutor is also the staff member who has brought the allegation forward, the student can contact another Module Tutor/academic or a staff member from Student Support. For students at Partner institutions, students can contact their College Liaison Tutor/Appropriate member of LTU staff for advice as well as their own tutors.

F2.2 The Learning Hub at the University is here to help students develop the skills needed to succeed in their studies. The Learning Hub can support students with essay writing, time management, critical thinking and reading amongst other aspects of study.

- F2.3 Student Support Services are available to students and can be accessed and booked via the MyLTU app or via email at [studentsupport@leedstrinity.ac.uk](mailto:studentsupport@leedstrinity.ac.uk).
- F2.4 The Leeds Trinity University Library is available to help students develop further knowledge and skills to succeed in their studies, particularly in relation to referencing. Further details of this can be found at: [Referencing - Referencing - Leeds Trinity University Library at Leeds Trinity University](#).
- F2.5 The Learning Hub and Student Support Services are for on-campus students only. Students from Partner institutions will need to contact their own institution for support and guidance.

### **F3 Poor Scholarship**

- F3.1 Poor Scholarship can take many forms although it is commonly associated with errors in presentation and the referencing of source material. For example, poor scholarship can be said to have occurred when there appears to have been some attempt to attribute material to a source but inadequate referencing or technical skills results in the reader being misled as to the origins of the idea or words used. A typical case may involve where different authors have been drawn from and it appears that the sources have been paraphrased to support the student's own argument, when in fact it is a collection of sentences copied verbatim that are not enclosed in quotation marks. It is a matter of academic judgement whether such an instance of bad practice is a result of a student's lack of understanding and constitutes poor scholarship or whether it is a misappropriation of content that constitutes academic misconduct. The most serious referencing deficiencies may be regarded as plagiarism, based on the facts contained in the work, even though the student may not have set out to deliberately deceive the reader.
- F3.2 Instances considered to be poor scholarship are addressed more judiciously at the point of marking, taking into consideration the nature and level of the assignment and the information provided in the assessment brief. According to the University's generic descriptors for marking criteria inadequate referencing or technical skills result in failure of a criterion of assessment and limited adherence to academic conventions is indicative of third-class work. Errors of presentation may be looked upon more leniently early in a student's academic career, although by Level 6/Postgraduate level, the University would expect a student to be able to reference all sources accurately in a way that does not mislead the reader on the origins of an idea or groups of words. A student who has failed to apply the academic conventions defined for the programme should not be able to be eligible to graduate with a degree from Leeds Trinity University.

- F3.3 Where lower marks have been awarded to a piece of work due to poor scholarship, the reasons should be clearly indicated in the written assessment feedback to the student.

## **F4 Collusion and Collaborative Learning**

- F4.1 Working in collaboration with others is recognised as a valuable part of learning. It is expected that students will explore and discuss ideas in their peer groups. However, unless collaborative work has been expressly permitted in the assignment brief, the assignment must be the individual student's own work. Where the assessment contains group work, students should be able to clearly identify their individual contribution and the process by which it was achieved. For example, where group research data is to be used to inform an individual report, each student should keep independent notes of their participation in the group activities.
- F4.2 Drafts of work and preparatory notes may be requested by an investigating panel and it is a student's responsibility to be able to demonstrate their engagement with the assessment process.
- F4.3 For cases of collusion, staff should schedule meetings with all students involved on the same date, if possible. Staff should also not disclose the identity of any other student involved in the case. Marks will be held for all students involved until the full investigation has been completed and if escalated to a panel hearing, all students will need to be referred to a panel hearing.
- F4.4 The University reserves the right to share information about a student's work with other institutions/bodies to investigate cases of collusion.

## **F5 Use of *viva voce* inquiries in the investigation of cases**

- F5.1 If the Chair of the Assessment Panel is unable to satisfy themselves that there is a clear and convincing case to answer, for example, where an allegation relates to suspected contract cheating (defined in section B3.2), then a *viva voce* inquiry may be incorporated into the investigatory interview process set out in section C2.6 – C2.12.
- F5.2 The Panel of a *viva voce* will consist of a Chair, usually an independent academic staff, and a subject specialist (normally the Chair of the Assessment Panel (or nominee) or the marker). For on-campus cases, the Academic Quality Office can attend as notetaker, if available. For cases at Partner Institutes, the College Liaison Tutor or Nominee must attend as a notetaker.
- F5.3 The student shall be provided with details of the allegation and be advised that the purpose of the meeting is to confirm the authenticity of

the assignment and their understanding of the work. The student will be given at least 5 working days' notice of the *viva voce* and are to be given two different dates. The student is then to confirm which date is most suitable.

- F5.4 If the student does not respond to the invitation by the specified deadline or does not provide a valid reason as to why they are unable to attend, they will be advised that failure to attend the meeting, without good cause, will mean that the marker is unable to award an academic mark for the work and that a mark of zero will be returned for the piece of work.
- F5.5 At the conclusion of the *viva voce*, the Viva Panel will consider if there is a case to be answered. If it is decided that there is no case to answer, the work will be returned to the marker to be marked as normal. If it is decided that a case of misconduct has occurred, the case will be referred to the University's Student Academic and Professional Misconduct Panel.

## **F6 Student record, transfer of programmes and providing references**

- F6.1 Instances of poor scholarship and academic misconduct are recorded on the student's record. A central database of penalties is also maintained by the Academic Quality Office and this is made available to the University-level panel as case law to ensure consistency of application of penalties. Chairs of Assessment Panels (or nominees) may obtain advice on case law from the AQO. The data collected informs an annual report to the Academic Quality and Standards Committee to provide institutional oversight of the policy and procedure. Partner Institutes should have their own central database of penalties.
- F6.2 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 Director of Academic Quality and Standards.
- F6.3 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 Academic Quality Office for information on misconduct offences.

## **F7 Proof-Reading and Translation Services**

- F7.1 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.
- F7.2 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.
- F7.3 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).

## Penalties table

Minor				
Category	Indicative Offence Details	Level	Penalty (First offence)	Penalty (Subsequent Offence)
Poor Scholarship	Student has over-relied on sources or has not yet learnt the correct academic conventions.	All Levels	No penalty. Work is marked on its merits, discounting plagiarised sections	No penalty. Work is marked on its merits, discounting plagiarised sections
Self-Plagiarism	Student has not referenced their previous assignment or developed those ideas.	All Levels	No penalty. Work is marked on its merits, discounting plagiarised highlighted sections	No penalty. Work is marked on its merits, discounting plagiarised sections
Plagiarism (any amount)	Unreferenced and paraphrased <b>OR</b> verbatim. Student has not referenced original source. This can include the use of word spinners/synonyms.	Foundation and Level 4	Formal Warning, work is marked on its merits, discounting plagiarised sections	Work is marked on its merits, discounting plagiarised sections.
Collusion	Making work available to another student either intentionally or as a result of neglect. Collaboration with another student when work is presented as that of a single student.	Foundation and Level 4	Formal Warning, work is marked on its merits, discounting highlighted sections	Formal Warning, work is marked on its merits, discounting highlighted sections.
Exams	Any form of disruptive behaviour. Not following the instructions given by the examination invigilator. 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.	All Levels	Formal Warning, exam is marked	Formal Warning, exam is marked.
Moderate				
Plagiarism (any amount)	<b>Unreferenced and paraphrased.</b> Student has taken idea from a source and has paraphrased this, without acknowledging the original source or without sufficient attribution of ideas. This can include using synonyms and word spinners.	Levels 5, 6 and 7	Work is marked on its merits, discounting plagiarised sections.	Awarded a Mark of 0 + required to revise and resubmit the assignment*
Plagiarism (Up to 50%)	<b>Unreferenced and verbatim.</b> Student has taken an idea from a source and has not referenced the source and has copied it verbatim.	Levels 5, 6 and 7	Awarded a Mark of 0 + required to revise and resubmit the assignment*	Awarded a Mark of 0 + required to revise and resubmit the assignment*

Persistent Poor Scholarship (considered as Plagiarism)	Student continuously has poor scholarship in their assignments. Clear guidance on academic conventions has been provided previously with direct feedback on techniques to use.	Level 5, 6 and 7	Awarded a Mark of 0 + required to revise and resubmit the assignment*	Awarded a Mark of 0 + required to revise and resubmit the assignment*
Collusion	Making work available to another student either intentionally or as a result of neglect. Collaboration with another student when work is presented as that of a single student.	Levels 5, 6 and 7	Awarded a Mark of 0 + required to revise and resubmit the assignment*	Awarded a Mark of 0 + required to revise and resubmit the assignment*
Exams	Obtaining or seeking to obtain examination papers prior to the examination, unless the paper has been provided as a 'seen' examination.	All Levels	Formal Warning	Exam marked but mark to be capped at pass mark (40 UG/50 PG)
	Copying from another candidate or from any unauthorised material, including by use of an electrical device. Communicating or attempting to communicate with other candidates or with any person(s) except the invigilator, including by use of an electrical device.	Foundation and Level 4	Mark of 0 + required to resit the exam component*	Mark of 0 + required to resit the exam component*
Contract Cheating	Any case of contract cheating	Foundation and Level 4	Mark of 0 + required to submit a new assignment*	Mark of 0 + required to submit a new assignment*
<b>Serious</b>				
Plagiarism (Above 50%)	<b>Unreferenced and verbatim.</b> Student has taken an idea from a source and has not referenced the source and has copied it verbatim. This can also include secondary research as part of Literature Reviews.	Levels 5, 6 and 7	Awarded a Mark of 0 + required to revise and resubmit the assignment*	Awarded a Mark of 0 + required to submit a <b>new</b> assignment*
Exams	Copying from another candidate or from any unauthorised material, including by use of an electrical device. Communicating or attempting to communicate with other candidates or with any person(s) except the invigilator, including by use of an electrical device.	Levels 5, 6 and 7	Mark of 0 + required to resit the exam component*	Mark of 0 for <b>module</b> + required to repeat module in the next academic year*

Contract Cheating	Any case of contract cheating	Level 5, 6 and 7	Mark of 0 + required to submit a new assignment*	Mark of 0 for <b>module</b> + required to repeat module in the next academic year*
Fabrication or Falsification	Content of assessment or records. Documentation associated with academic progress (e.g. entry statements or qualifications) False claims for exemption or mitigation Misrepresentation of a word count. Contribution to a group assessment.	All Levels	Mark of 0 + required to submit a new assignment*	Mark of 0 for <b>module</b> + required to repeat module in the next academic year*
Research Misconduct	Unethical conduct in data collection presenting risk to participants or the University. Failure to obtain ethical approval prior to commencing primary research. Improper conduct of the research. Improper relationship and dealings with participants. Improper handling of data.	Foundation, Level 4 and 5	Awarded a Mark of 0 + required to submit a new assignment*	Awarded a Mark of 0 + required to submit a new the assignment*
		Level 6 and 7	Awarded a Mark of 0 + required to submit a new the assignment*	Mark of 0 for <b>module</b> + required to repeat module in the next academic year*
Impersonation	Being party to any arrangement whereby a person, other than a student fraudulently represents or intends to	All Levels	Mark of 0 + required to submit a new assignment*	Mark of 0 for <b>module</b> + required to repeat module in the next academic year*

Notes:

1. This table acts as a guide and each case must be considered on its merits. There will be occasions when particular factors mean that a case falls within either a higher or lower category than indicated in this guide to provide greater consideration and ensure that a fair outcome can be reached. The level of consideration and finding of academic misconduct is ultimately a matter of academic judgement.
2. \*Once a penalty has been applied, the normal academic regulations will be applied. For example: if a student receives *Formal Warning, work is marked on its merits, discounting highlighted sections* and it is deemed their work is a fail once it is marked, they will still be entitled to a resit (if a first attempt), which will be capped at the pass mark. Any applicable late submission penalties on resit work will be applied to the academic mark before it is capped.
3. For all offences, students are required to undertake an Academic Integrity Tutorial, facilitated by the Learning Hub.
4. The penalties indicated for subsequent offences above refer to what would be typical for a second offence. If a student has had 3 or more cases of misconduct, it is considered that staff will apply a more severe penalty but this will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Such cases would be regarded as serious. Subsequent offences can occur at any level i.e., if a student has one offence at Level 4, then commits an offence in Level 5, the Level 5 case would be a subsequent offence. Staff can confirm with the Assessment Team or

AQO if a student has had a previous offence.

5. If a penalty is applied to a resit assignment, the normal regulations will apply. This means that, the mark will always be capped at the pass mark, regardless of the penalty in line with the normal regulations.
6. If the penalty states “*Revise and Resubmit the assignment*” or “*Submit a new assignment*” staff should confirm with the Assessment Team if the student has this option available to them. For example, if a student is already on a second attempt of the component (resit), they would not be able to resubmit an assignment therefore, the penalty would need to be adjusted accordingly. Staff can contact AQO to discuss the penalty further.
  
7. *Mark on Merits: Where a marker/assessor notes that plagiarism has occurred in a student’s assignment, they should normally discount any text which has been plagiarised and should award a mark based on academic value of the work that remains. This shall not be regarded as a penalty. The mark awarded is the academic judgement of the marker/assessor.* The student should be advised on how to improve their performance.
  
8. The University’s Academic and Professional Misconduct Panel has the authority to impose any other penalty deemed to be appropriate to the individual circumstances of the case, including the below, however, this is not exhaustive:
  - a. Awarding a mark of 0 + required to repeat the year
  - b. Additional Learning Activity or Verification Task (if applicable)
  - c. Limit imposed on final award classification
  - d. Cancellation of registration with the University with no opportunity for reassessment. It will be at the discretion of the APM Panel whether any eligible interim award or credit is awarded.