



## Academic Misconduct Policy and Procedure **Bath Spa University (BSU)** Taught Degree Programmes

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Category: Policies – Registry and Administration (HE)

Owner(s): Academic Board: Registry Lead

Approved by: The Board of Governors

Access: **Public** – Anyone can view this document

Scope: This Policy applies to all students enrolled on higher education programmes leading to an award from **Bath Spa University** only.

Students enrolled on a higher education programme leading to an award with any other awarding body should consult the appropriate policy, which can be found here:

<https://fsb.ac.uk/policy-hub/>

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## 1. Academic Misconduct

- 1.1. FSB believes in upholding academic integrity. Students are expected to be honest in their studies, acknowledge the work of others where appropriate, and give credit where they need to appropriately use other people's ideas as part of presenting their own work, using the correct procedures for referencing and attribution.
- 1.2. All students will be assessed on their own ability and that all assessment work submitted must be original. Academic Misconduct is defined as any activity employed by a student which proves to be unfair academically and gives an advantage over others. Academic Misconduct is usually called 'unfair practice' or 'cheating'.
- 1.3. Academic Misconduct is different from Poor Academic Practice, which can be defined as a minor breach of ordinary academic conventions, like poorly attributed or incorrect referencing, or limited over-reliance on reference material, usually resulting from a misunderstanding or lack of confidence in conventions and where there has clearly been no intention to deceive.
- 1.4. Poor academic practice is going to be dealt with as part of the marking and feedback process because it represents a failure to follow assessment and marking criteria.
- 1.5. You are expected to present your own words, your own analysis, and your own arguments in your work. It is acceptable to use the work of others to support arguments and analysis, and tutors will be able to inform you as to what constitutes good practice and give help with conventions such as referencing and the provision of footnotes. If you're in any doubt about what constitutes good practice and what constitutes plagiarism, you're advised to consult your tutors for advice. It is also recommended that you seek advice from the Academic Support Centre of your relevant campus regarding academic writing and referencing.
- 1.6. Where cases of educational Misconduct are suspected, the School will follow the tutorial Misconduct Policy outlined below. Students should be in little question that Academic Misconduct is regarded as a very serious offence in higher education. Claims that a student was not aware of the offence or its consequences, or did not understand what constitutes Academic Misconduct, will not be accepted under any circumstances. Academic Misconduct will end in a penalty even when it is unintended or accidental.
- 1.7. Students should remember that an Academic Misconduct case can be opened at any time, whether the student has graduated and is no longer a current student.

## 2. Plagiarism Detection

- 2.1. FSB is a member of the Turnitin UK Service and uses this service to aid in the detection Academic Misconduct.

All student work is uploaded to the Turnitin system, which compares the document against a database of billions of internet pages, previous student papers and journals (amongst others). Turnitin provides an Originality Report for every document uploaded to it, which shows the extent of similarity with other sources.

Plagiarism detection is not limited to the use of Turnitin. Tutors also will look to evidence of the following:

- Plagiarism from published texts (not necessarily available online)
- Similarities with the work of other students which can suggest collusion
- Content that appears to be clearly beyond the known capabilities of a student
- Work that's expressed through a style which does not match the known writing or language abilities of a student.

### 3. Types of Academic Misconduct

3.1. Academic Misconduct may take a multitude of forms, and therefore the following explains some of the most common types of Academic misconduct. This list isn't definitive; any activity which meets the School's definition of Academic Misconduct may be considered under this policy.

#### **Plagiarism**

3.2. Plagiarism is submitting the work or ideas of somebody else as your own, without appropriate referencing. Examples include, but aren't limited to:

- Copying sections from one or more books / articles / other published sources without acknowledgement of the source(s). It's still plagiarism if you reproduce sections from several sources instead of one
- Excessive dependence upon one or a limited number of sources is plagiarism if the sources are inadequately referenced, whether or not the original text has been paraphrased.
- Copying from other members while working with a group.
- Submitting your own previous work (in whole or in part) from another course/module, whether or not this is from a different institution.
- This is often sometimes known as 'self-plagiarism' or 'double counting'.
- Submitting the work of any third party, including students and former students.

#### **Impersonation**

3.3. Impersonation is submitting work prepared by another person for assessment purposes. Examples include, but aren't limited to:

- Purchasing essays
- Writing an assessment for another student.

### **Collusion**

- 3.4. Collusion is that the failure to work independently, where this is often required, and showing the work off as your own individual effort.
- 3.5. Students should note that collusion is different to collaboration and a few assignments may specify that students should work together and submit joint work. Students should never submit joint work unless it's clearly stated as a requirement in the module's written documentation, and, in such cases, students should seek clarification from their tutors as to the level of collaboration that is acceptable.
- 3.6. All students implicated during a case of collusion will be considered as having breached Academic Practice, even when one student is believed to possess copied from another. This is often the result of not adequately securing your work or sharing / showing someone else your work that can make you culpable for collusion. Only where students can provide clear proof that their work has been stolen or otherwise acquired without their consent may they be exonerated from the accusation of collusion.

### **Exam misconduct**

- 3.7. Exam misconduct means breaching exam regulations to get an unfair advantage. Examples include, but are not limited to:
- Use of unauthorised technology during the exam
  - Use of unauthorised notes / other help material
  - Refusing to handover your paper at the given time
  - Impersonation in exams.

### **Falsification**

- 3.8. Falsification means submitting data, observations or other research in assessed work which has been either fabricated or falsified.

## **4. Penalties for Academic Misconduct**

- 4.1. Where an accusation of unfair practice has been substantiated to the satisfaction of the Academic Misconduct Panel, the accusation is claimed to be established. In determining the acceptable penalty, the Academic Misconduct Panel will usually consider the following:
- The degree of deception involved
  - Whether the student has been subject to a previous accusation of Academic Misconduct

- The level of Academic misconduct
- The extent of the Academic Misconduct
- Any admission and/or explanation by the scholar of the Academic Misconduct.

4.2. It is possible that additional factors could also be considered when determining the appropriate penalty if these are deemed relevant by the Academic Misconduct Panel.

4.3. Students should remember that an established accusation of Academic Misconduct may result in severe consequences for the career prospects of a student on a course which has a particular focus on honesty, integrity, and ethical behaviour.

4.4. The following table of categories shows the penalties available to the Academic Misconduct Panel. As many variables are taken into consideration by the Panel when determining an appropriate penalty, it isn't possible to provide a definitive list of offences and the penalty these will incur. The following table is therefore intended to provide an indicative estimation only:

Category	Action regarding progression	Action re mark	Counted for classification	Record on transcript	Notes (these to be used as a guide only)
N/A	None	No action taken	N/A	N/A	No evidence of academic misconduct, student exonerated.
0	None	Student notified of Category 0 penalty, but no action taken against any assessment item or module	No	No	Unwitting offence. Evidence of academic misconduct, but clear that this was not substantial and was unintended (first offence).
1	None	Assessment capped at pass mark	No	No	Unwitting offence. Evidence of academic misconduct, but clear that this was not substantial and was unintended (second offence or high level of study).
2	Fail assessment	Assessment capped at pass mark	No	No	Evidence of very minor infringement.
3	Fail assessment	Module capped at pass mark	No	No	Evidence of very minor infringement (second offence); evidence of minor to moderate infringement (first offence).

4	Fail module, may retake	Module capped at pass mark	Yes	Yes	Evidence of minor to moderate infringement (second offence); evidence of serious infringement (first offence).
5	Fail module, may retake	Module capped at zero	Yes	Yes	Evidence of serious infringement (second offence). Can also be used for repeat offenders in lower categories.
6	Fail module	No right to retake module	n/a	Yes	Evidence of very serious infringement with clear attempt to deceive.
7	Fail course	Dismissal from University	n/a	n/a	Gross misconduct.

Table 1: Penalties for Academic Misconduct

## 5. Indicative level of offence

Indicative Level of Offence	Example	Indicative penalty category
Minor	Poor referencing	0-1
	Very minor plagiarism	
Moderate	Repeated minor misconduct	2-5
	Substantial portions of directly copied / unreferenced text	
Severe	Stealing a test paper	6-7
	Purchasing essays	
	Falsifying research data	

Table 2: Indicative Levels of Offence

- 5.1. Students should note that at Penalty Category 4 and above, the results will include a permanent record on the student's transcript, and therefore the requirement that any capped mark (which may be zero) must count for classification purposes (above Level 4).
- 5.2. Students should remember that, if the module to which an academic Misconduct penalty has been applied is subsequently failed, the penalty is going to be carried over and will apply to whatever module is added to a student's record because of the failed module. Students should remember that instances of very severe Academic Misconduct may additionally lead to disciplinary action.

## 6. Guidance for Handling Poor Academic Practice and Academic Misconduct

The following procedure outlines the steps for identifying and managing cases of poor academic practice and academic misconduct, ensuring that all concerns are addressed fairly and consistently.

### 6.1. **Identification of Potential Academic Integrity Issue:**

The first step is to identify any potential issue regarding academic integrity. This may be flagged by a tutor, marker, or through automated tools such as Turnitin, among other methods.

### 6.2. **Course Coordinator Review:**

Once a potential issue is identified, the course coordinator will review the case to determine whether it constitutes a major or minor breach of academic integrity.

### 6.3. **Determination of Offence Severity:**

If the issue is identified as a **major offence**, it will be classified as a suspected **academic misconduct**.

If the issue is identified as a **minor offence**, it will be classified as **poor academic practice**.

### 6.4. **Action for Poor Academic Practice:**

If the issue is deemed poor academic practice, the course coordinator will email the student to inform them of the concern. The student will be advised to contact their tutor to discuss the matter further.

### 6.5. **Action for Suspected Academic Misconduct:**

If the issue is suspected academic misconduct, the course coordinator will proceed with the following actions:

I - Complete the Academic Misconduct Accusation Form to formally document the suspicion.

II - Email the student to notify them of the suspected violation, attaching the Turnitin report and a copy of the Academic Misconduct Policy. The student will be asked to provide a written response within **10 working days**.

Please copy in the Academic Team Leader and the marker in this communication.

III - The student will be required to schedule a meeting with the module tutor(s) to discuss the matter. It is recommended that at least two staff members should be present at the meeting, and a written record of the meeting must be taken.

IV - Request a report and any supporting evidence from the tutor(s) regarding the suspected violation.



6.6. **Course Coordinator Review and Interview:**

After receiving the necessary reports and evidence, the course coordinator will review the statements and invite the student for an interview to further discuss the case.

6.7. **Outcome for Poor Academic Practice:**

If the case is determined to be poor academic practice rather than academic misconduct, the course coordinator will send the student a formal outcome notification.

6.8. **Outcome for Suspected Academic Misconduct:**

If the case is confirmed as suspected academic misconduct, the course coordinator will submit the following documentation to Bath Spa University through the FSB BSU Programme Leader and Exams Officer:

I - The completed **Academic Misconduct Accusation Form**.

II - The student's **assignment** in question (Turnitin Report).

III - Any written records from the meeting with the tutor(s).

Please copy in the FSB Registry and Examinations Team when submitting the documents.

6.9. **Academic Misconduct Panel:**

Bath Spa University will convene an academic misconduct panel to review the case. The outcome of this review will be confirmed to FSB and the student.

6.10. **Notification of Outcome to Student:**

The outcome of the academic misconduct panel will be communicated to the student within **two working days**.

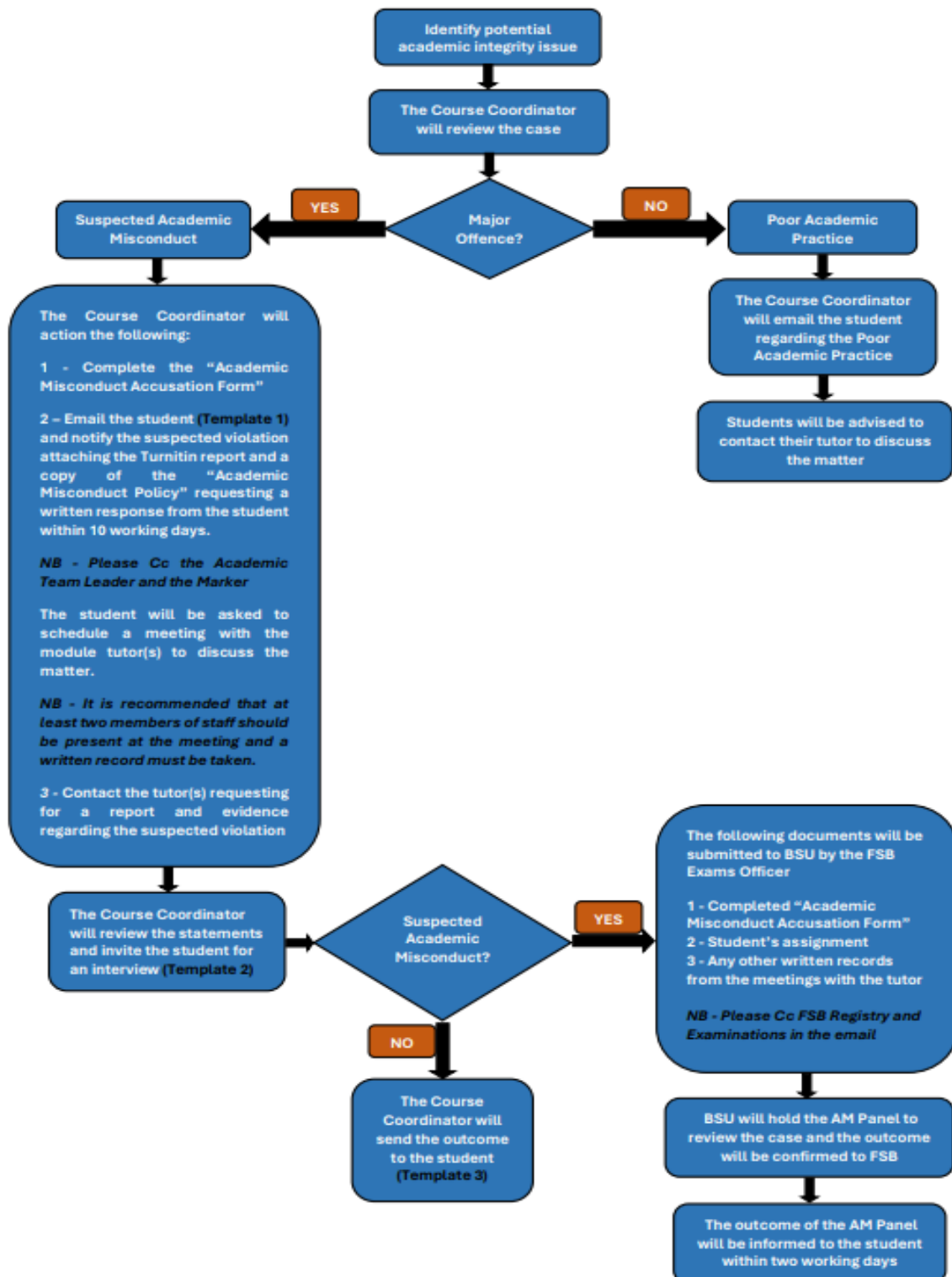
This procedure ensures that all academic integrity issues are handled systematically, fairly, and in accordance with the guidelines set by Bath Spa University and Fairfield School of Business. The process is designed to maintain the high academic standards expected of our students while ensuring transparency and due process.

## 7. Review

- 7.1. The student may wish to appeal against the decision of the panel. Further detail can be found in the Appeal Policy and Procedure for Bath Spa University Programmes. You can find this here: <https://fsb.ac.uk/policy-hub/>

## 8. Appendix

### **ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT PROCEDURE IN PARTNERSHIP WITH BSU**





**Version Tracking:**

Version	Author / revisions by	Changes summary	Approved by:	Date
1.0	Original approved version adapted from BSU policy Dean of Learning and Teaching	-	Board of Governors	Jun 2021
1.1	Dean of Learning and Teaching Quality Team	Reformatted – pagination and version control – minor changes.	Board of Governors	Sep 2022
1.2	Dean of Learning and Teaching Quality Team	Annual review and update, minor changes.	Board of Governors	Sep 2023
2.0	Dean of Learning and Teaching Quality Team	BSU-specific version differentiated from other awarding bodies.	Board of Governors	Sep 2024
2.1	Registry Quality Team	Addition of process chart in Appendix 8	Board of Governors	Mar 2025

**Date of next review:** September 2025