



ACADEMIC DISCIPLINE POLICY

Audience	Policy	Version and Date	Next Review Due	External Reference Points:
External (Student VLE)	Academic Discipline Policy	V-04 (revised), November 2018	November 2019	UKQC Chapter B6: Assessment of Students and the Recognition of Prior Learning BTEC Centre Guide to Quality Assurance and Assessment 2018-19: Levels 4 to 7 QAA guidance document "Contracting to Cheat in Higher Education – How to Address Cheating, the Use of Third-Party Services and Essay Mills".

AIMS

This policy aims to establish a clear and fair process to be followed for preventing, identifying, investigating and responding to suspected unacceptable academic practice. This protects the academic standard of the programme, by ensuring that students cannot obtain awards through any form of unacceptable academic practice relating to assessment.

The processes described in this policy apply to students studying on HND Courses.

POLICY

- The College will facilitate the gathering of evidence and provide students who are believed to have engaged in unacceptable practice with the opportunity to put their case, test the evidence and offer any explanation or mitigation.
- The handling of individual cases takes account of the needs of the student, including those arising from protected characteristics.
- Clear information is provided to all concerned about the rights of anyone involved in a case where unacceptable practice is suspected, including whether they are entitled to be accompanied or represented, and to appeal against the decision and/or penalties.
- Penalties for proven cases of unacceptable practice are clear, proportionate and consistently and equitably applied.
- The expectations of learners at all stages of study and the responsibilities of students and staff in meeting those expectations are identified.

The following are examples of offences that are covered by this policy:

- Cheating in an examination
- Impersonation
- Fabrication
- Collusion



- Plagiarism
- Submission of work produced by someone else

DEFINITIONS

Because of the issues and factors surrounding academic practice, the College distinguishes issues of academic concern from those of academic offence as follows:

Academic concerns occur where the integrity of academic process has been deemed potentially to be compromised such that the College does not have a reasonable level of confidence that the work submitted conforms to the regulations. A concern would be considered where the nature of the offence, or the point of study suggests that guidance and being dealt with as a concern would be the best course of action.

Academic offences are identified as occasions or circumstances within which it can be demonstrated on the balance of probabilities that a student has deliberately (knowingly), or through culpable negligence (unknowingly), used unfair means to achieve an assessment or some other aspect of their academic or academically-based progress, as an applicant or enrolled student of the College.

PROCEDURE

Identification

Where a suspicion of academic malpractice is identified by staff involved in the marking process, the individual shall report the matter to the Programme Leader in the first instance as a matter of urgency by completing the [Academic Concern Form \(ACF\)](#). However, all staff and students have a responsibility to report instances of suspected misconduct.

Where work submitted by students is the subject of an academic offence investigation, it should be marked and graded on the basis of the submission but should not be processed for mark confirmation until the investigation is completed.

Where academic malpractice is identified by staff invigilating an examination, the existing regulations governing the conduct of the examinations procedures will apply.

Consideration by the Programme Leader

A decision should be made as to whether suspected malpractice should be considered as an academic offence or an academic concern and the students' records checked to determine previous activity and their level of study.

Where the issue is a first offence, factors affecting this decision deciding if this is a potential concern or offence may include:

- The amount of similarity identified via Turnitin,
- Whether there was an attempt to acknowledge the sources,
- Where the similarity occurs: (for example a similarity within the conclusion and recommendations may be considered more serious than a similarity in the literature review),

Where there is a second offence, this may also be considered as an academic concern if:



- The submission date was before the student would have received guidance following the first concern,
- Where the student has been seen to apply the guidance from the first concern but requires additional feedback to address minor errors,
- Where the concern is minor, such as the student has a referencing error where they have acknowledged the source in the text, but forgotten to include it in the reference list, and the rest of the submission is correctly referenced.

The Programme Leader decides whether a case can be argued for academic offence following discussion with the Head of Programmes and Academic Monitoring, in which case the College would proceed with an Academic Offence Panel. The decision is recorded on the ACF.

Dealing with issues of Academic Concern

If it is considered that the work contains an academic concern, the student will be invited to a meeting with their Personal Tutor where they will be given the opportunity to defend their case. The Personal Tutor will show them the evidence of the concern and give guidance and feedback regarding how to prevent it in further assignments.

Academic Offence Panel

The function of the Academic Offence Panel is to ensure all alleged cases of academic offence are investigated and to ensure consistency of approach across the College. The panel determines whether an academic offence has been committed and determines an appropriate penalty and/or further action.

The panel will consist of a Chair, and two additional panel members. No two attending members will be from the same Department. The panel will comprise from a membership pool of Head of HE, Heads of Academic Departments, lecturers and the Registrar.

The Programme Leader will contact the student to advise them of the allegation, including copies of relevant and available evidence. The student will also be advised that they can contact their Personal Tutor for advice and that they may bring a friend or student representative to the panel, however, there is no entitlement to legal representation at this stage

Where a student accepts the allegation, they will not be invited to attend the meeting to speak to the panel but may send through a written statement for consideration.

Where the student does not accept the allegation, they will be invited to attend the meeting on a specified date, time and location to speak to the panel. If this is not possible, they may send through a written statement for consideration.

In cases where the student successfully defends the allegation, the matter will be dropped and the student's work will be marked as normal with the full range of marks being available without penalty.

In the event of suspected submission of work produced by someone else, the student may be invited to attend a viva to help staff reach a conclusion about the nature and extent of any suspected offence. The notes taken at the viva can be considered as evidence by the panel.



Range of Outcomes

The Panel shall seek to impose penalties for an academic offence that constitutes equitable treatment of all students and at the same time allow a student found guilty of an academic offence to recover their standing and to progress in their studies:

The possible Panel outcomes are:

Resolved

- a) The allegation is successfully defended, and the case is dismissed
- b) Case dismissed

Proven

- a) Fail and undertake a resubmission of assessment with grades/marks capped
- b) Fail and undertake a retake of assessment with grades/marks capped (without attendance)
- c) Fail and undertake a retake of assessment with grades/marks capped (with attendance)
- d) Fail the term/semester
- e) Fail the course and be required to exit

Where a student has multiple and serial offences, or where the offence is considered to be deliberate and severe, the student may be exited from the College and not permitted to continue with their studies. They will normally be entitled to any award for which they are eligible.

Any penalties applied override any decision taken regarding mitigating circumstances applications. The decisions of the Assessment and Progression Board are final and cannot be overridden.

The application of penalties can be expected to be applied once the Assessment and Progression Board has met and ratified the decision.

The procedures outlined by this policy must therefore be completed **before** any Assessment and Progression Board takes place.

Students have the right to Appeal against the decision and the procedure is described in LCC's Academic Appeals Policy and Procedure, which can be accessed on the VLE.



ACADEMIC CONCERN FORM (ACF)

Student Name			
Student ID No		Term / Semester	
Programme			
Unit Name			

Type of Concern/Offence:

- | | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|--|
| Cheating (in an exam) | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| Impersonation | <input type="checkbox"/> | Plagiarism <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Fabrication | <input type="checkbox"/> | Work produced by a third party <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Collusion | <input type="checkbox"/> | Other <input type="checkbox"/> |

Details of the current Offence/Concern:

Details of any Previous Offences/Concerns:

Form Completed by	
Position	
Date	

To be dealt with as:

(Please consult Academic Discipline Policy for guidance on academic practice and plagiarism)

Concern

Offence

Confirmed by Programme Leader	
Date	