

POLICY/PROCEDURE: HE STUDENT ACADEMIC INTEGRITY & ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Approval required by:	SLT	Y	Governing Body	N
SMT Lead:	VP Quality			
Responsible Manager:	Director of Quality (HE)			
Date approved:	November 2023			
Date to be reviewed:	November 2024			
Relevant to:	Students	Y	Staff	Y
	Visitors	N		
Relevant to:	All students	N		
	16-18 Vocational	N	Sixth Form	N
	Higher Education	Y	Adults	N
	Apprenticeships	Y	14-16	N
	Other	N	
Relevant to:	All staff	Y		
	Board	N	SPH	N
	Managers	Y		
	Teaching staff	Y	Support staff	N
Accessible to	Students	Y	Staff	Y
Friendly version	Students	N	Staff	N
	EQIA required	N		

Significant changes to policy:

Renaming of policy to reflect the focus on academic integrity.

Inclusion of the use of artificial intelligence software to create assessment content with the intention of presenting it as original work.

Impact of changes:

Clarity around the College position regarding the use of artificial intelligence software in HE student submissions.

SCOPE AND PURPOSE:

The policy outlines Barnsley College's approach to issues of academic misconduct within students' academic work. It aims to provide guidelines for staff when dealing with such issues.

The purpose of the policy is to outline:

- What constitutes academic integrity and academic misconduct
- Examples of academic misconduct and how they are categorised
- How allegations of academic misconduct will be considered
- What outcomes students can reasonably expect
- How students can appeal a finding of academic misconduct

Barnsley College signed up to the [QAA Academic Integrity Charter](#) during the academic year 2020-21. Signing up to the Charter represents an institutional pledge to implement its principles and commitments which include working with staff and students and, in collaboration across the sector, to protect and promote academic integrity, and take action against academic misconduct.

Barnsley College does not condone academic misconduct or plagiarism of any kind and will take appropriate action if it is detected in students' work. Information on academic misconduct is covered in all courses during induction.

This policy applies to any piece of work submitted for formal assessment towards a College (Professional HE programmes) or University-validated award at the College.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Academic Integrity is a commitment to approaching academic work honestly. All students have a responsibility to act with honesty, integrity and fairness in completing assessment requirements in relation to their course of study.

Students can ensure that their work upholds academic integrity standards by:

- Completing their own original work
- Attributing and acknowledging sources when necessary
- Not relying on dishonest means to gain advantage

As a Higher Education student at the College, this means making a commitment to engage with good academic practice and skills training.

Barnsley College operates a 'whole college' approach to academic integrity. This means that every member of the College, whether a student or a member of staff, has a responsibility to maintain academic integrity.

For staff, this means that the College has a responsibility to support you in your learning and to provide you with the tools to avoid academic misconduct. It also means that where a tutor responsible for marking work suspects that a student has produced work that breaches the Academic Integrity & Academic Misconduct Policy, they have an obligation to report it for investigation.

For students, this means that you must:

- Properly acknowledge all sources of information, knowledge, and ideas that have contributed to your own studies or research by consistently and correctly using an acceptable referencing system.
- Produce work that is the product of your own, individual efforts (apart from groupwork assessment, see below).

- Where an assessment brief specifically requires a single piece of work be submitted on behalf of a group of students, you should ensure that each student's contribution to group work is represented honestly.

DEFINITIONS OF ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

Academic misconduct is the failure to act in accordance with generally recognised standards of academic behaviour and honesty.

Examples of academic misconduct include, but are not limited to:

Plagiarism

- Copying directly from a text (book, magazine or printed source) without reference to its author or using an appropriate referencing system. This also includes unpublished work (e.g. work of another student or your own work), and the direct and unacknowledged translation of foreign language texts into English.
- The use of electronic sources (internet, web pages, images etc.) without reference to the original source, and/or suggesting that these are the student's own work.
- Extensive and unacknowledged paraphrasing by, for instance, substituting a few words or phrases or altering the order of presentation of another person's work without reference to the original source.

Collusion

- Submission of work presented as the student's own which has been done in unauthorised collaboration with another person, whether or not that other person is also a student.
- Failing to safeguard work or making it available to another student who then submits it as their own (including access to work in subsequent academic sessions).
- Making assignment briefs or similar documents available to others (including posting to the internet) that results in an academic advantage.

Cheating

- Copying from another candidate's notes during an examination or test.
- Communication in any way during an examination or test with any person other than an authorised member of staff.
- Accessing or copying from any source of information during an examination or test (including written or printed materials and electronically stored information), except as authorised by the examination regulations.
- Gaining access to unauthorised material prior to an assessment (e.g. an examination paper).
- Impersonation, where another person sits an examination or test in the place of the actual student or a student is knowingly impersonated by another.

Contract Cheating

- 'Contract cheating', also known as 'essay mills', 'ghost writers' or 'third-party cheating', means submitting work as your own that has been purchased or commissioned from someone else. A fee does not have to be paid for contract cheating to have taken place. **This also includes using artificial intelligence software such as ChatGPT to create content and presenting it as your own.**

Self-plagiarism

'Self-plagiarism' involves submitting the same work for credit more than once, where this is not permitted by the requirements of the assessment.

This could mean duplicating work:

- That you submitted on a previous attempt at the same assessment;
- That you submitted on another module;
- That you submitted when studying towards another programme or at another institution.

Poor Academic Practice

Academic misconduct is distinct from **poor academic practice**, which is where an unacceptable proportion of the assessed work is based directly on the work of others (e.g. acceptable levels of direct quotation or paraphrasing have been exceeded), even if the work has been correctly referenced by the student.

In order to discourage poor academic practice and to develop students' independent learning skills, Module Leaders should impose a penalty by adjusting marks awarded and the **feedback to students should indicate that marks have been adjusted in this way as a result of poor academic practice.**

Repeated instances of poor academic practice following feedback and guidance provided to the student should be referred to the Academic Misconduct Panel for consideration.

GUIDELINES FOR STAFF

Teaching staff are expected to research copyright law within their own subject area (such as guidelines issued by The Association of Photographers) and advise students on the relevant legal requirements when using material related to their subject.

Examples of academic misconduct should be kept (without reference to named students) to periodically show the students how problems can occur.

Staff should monitor the submission of work, ensuring that assignments are signed and dated on receipt, to avoid plagiarism or collusion between students.

Students should have access to guidance on proper referencing (including internet sources) and good academic practice, as part of their induction and via the Learning Resource Centre.

Academic Misconduct Procedure

- The policy should be introduced to students at induction.
- Guidance should be given to enrolled students through tutorials and assessment feedback, including the requirement for students to keep their notes and references from each project, in case further evidence of research is needed at any stage during their programme.

For students on HE programmes validated by a collaborative partner university:

- **The relevant Academic Misconduct procedures of the partner institution must be followed.**

For students on all other Barnsley College programmes (e.g. Pearson Higher Nationals, Professional HE programmes):

- If academic misconduct is suspected, the tutor should bring the issue to the attention of the Pathway Leader (or equivalent), who will investigate the incident and send an

allegation letter to the student. Appropriate similarity detecting software (e.g. Turnitin) should be used to **aid** the investigation.

- The Pathway Leader should submit a Notice of Academic Misconduct form to the HE Quality Officer (Partnerships) along with statement of evidence (Appendix 3).
- The student will be invited to an Academic Misconduct Panel meeting, to be held with the HE Academic Registrar, the Programme Manager or Head of Department, and the Director of Quality (HE). The letter should include details of the allegation and evidence (a minimum of 5 working days notice must be given).
- If, following this meeting, it is considered that academic misconduct has occurred, the appropriate tariff penalty should be applied from the list in Appendix 1, and the HE Academic Registrar will write to the student to inform them of the decision.
- The student must be informed that if they wish to appeal against the decision, they must do so within 28 working days to the Vice Principal (Quality).
- Where academic misconduct has occurred, the decision of the Academic Misconduct Panel will be reported at the Course Assessment Board.
- A flowchart of the procedure is included in Appendix 2. Template forms and letters are included in Appendix 3.
- **Confidentiality must be respected during any investigation of academic misconduct.**

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

All students have equal access to the policy and procedures, and these will be applied equally to all students as per Awarding Body requirements.

LINKED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The HE Academic Misconduct Policy and Procedure is linked to:

- HE Academic Appeals Policy.
- Behaviour Support and Disciplinary Policy.

REFERENCES

This policy has been designed with consideration of the following the [revised UK Quality Code for Higher Education](#):

- Expectations for Standards S2.
- Expectations for Quality Q1, Q2.

[QAA Academic Integrity Charter](#)

LOCATION AND ACCESS TO THIS POLICY

This policy is available on our [website](#) and the Higher Education VLE.

APPENDIX 1

HE ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT PANEL – TARIFF OF PENALTIES

For the first allegation (subject to the levels of offence specified below):

Level of Offence	Nature of Academic Misconduct		Penalty to be Applied
Preliminary: Level 4 modules OR Level 5 modules where the element of assessment in question is 50% or less of the module	All aspects of Academic Misconduct other than those associated with a written examination.	Preliminary Penalty:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Award mark of 0% for the assessed work. Student to repeat the assessment as a tutor reassessment capped at Pass (40%). Refer to Study Skills Advisors. Record the offence on the student record.

(to be applied once only in advance of entering the subsequent system below)

For subsequent allegations, or first allegations where the element of assessment in question is more than 50% of a Level 5 module:

Level of Offence	Nature of Academic Misconduct		Penalty to be Applied
All levels:	A) Copying / communicating or otherwise cheating in a written examination, including introducing into the examination room any unauthorised written or printed text, calculators, books, dictionaries or other devices; OR B) All aspects of Academic Misconduct other than those associated with a written examination, having had a previous allegation upheld under the preliminary level above.	First Penalty:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Award mark of 0% for the whole module. Repeat the module in full at the next opportunity capped at Pass (40%). Refer to Study Skills Advisors. Record the offence on the student record.
		Second Penalty*:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Award mark of 0% for the whole module. Do not allow the student to repeat the assessment or the opportunity to take an alternative module. This may have the effect of requiring the student to change course and/or accept a lesser award. Refer to Study Skills Advisors. Record the offence on the student record.
		Third Penalty*:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Award mark of 0% for the whole module. Exclude the student from the College but allow the award of any credit the student has accumulated. Record the offence on the student record.

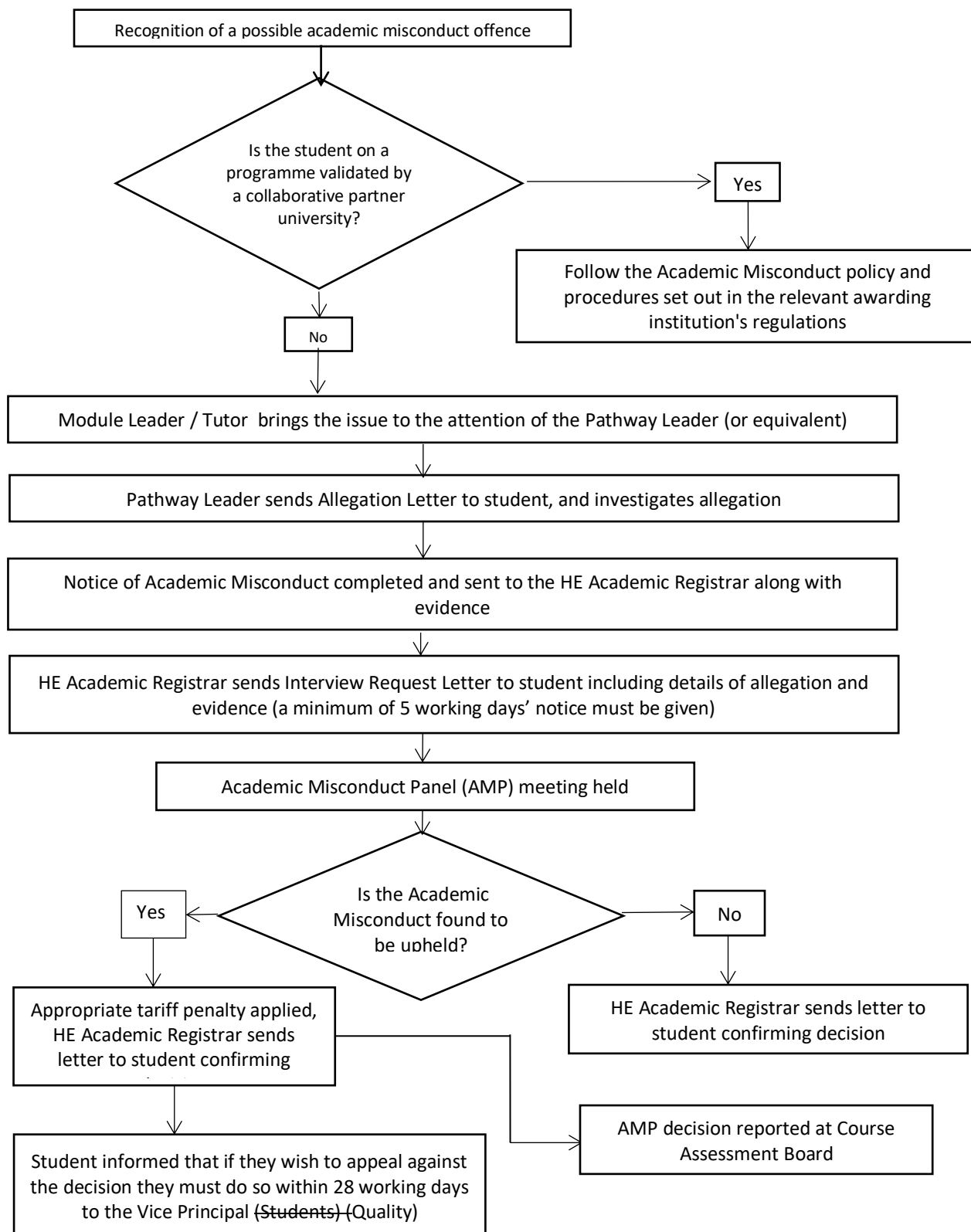
*Students who progress from HNC to HND will be considered as continuing students.

Guidance Notes

1. Academic misconduct offences associated with written examinations and other academic misconduct offences will be dealt with individually but added together when deciding on the overall number of offences.
2. If multiple academic misconduct offences are submitted at the same time they should be treated as one offence. An incident of academic misconduct only becomes an upheld offence in its own right if the outcomes of previous allegations were known to the student at the point of submitting the assignment in question.
3. If there are accepted mitigating circumstances a lesser penalty may be applied by the Academic Misconduct Panel. Evidence of the mitigating circumstances must be supplied to the HE Academic Registrar.
4. When an allegation comes to light after module credit has been awarded or an award has been conferred this should be investigated by the Academic Misconduct Panel to determine the required course of action.
5. If the nature of the offence is so serious that it falls into criteria that could trigger a disciplinary process, the Academic Misconduct Panel having applied the appropriate penalty may refer to the **Vice Principal (Students)** to consider disciplinary action under the Behaviour Support and Disciplinary Policy, for example where a student has impersonated another or obtained access to college computing systems fraudulently.

APPENDIX 2

HE ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT PROCEDURE FLOWCHART



APPENDIX 3

THE ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT FORM AND LETTER TEMPLATES

Appendix 3A - Letter informing student of allegation (to be sent out by Pathway Leader)

FIRST CLASS AND RECORDED DELIVERY

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

Date:

Dear **(name)**

Allegation of Academic Misconduct – **(specify plagiarism or other academic offence)**

I am writing to advise you that an allegation of academic misconduct has been made against you. This concerns your assessment for **(title of module)**. Your results for this module cannot be given to you until this issue is resolved.

You will be written to shortly and asked to attend a meeting of the Academic Conduct Panel at Barnsley College to discuss the above allegation.

If you intend to use any documents or evidence of notes used to complete the assessment please bring them to the meeting with you. If you wish to submit mitigating circumstances as to why this offence occurred, it must be provided at the meeting with supporting evidence.

You are entitled to bring a supporter with you to the interview, normally a representative from the Students' Union, another student, a member of academic staff or a member of staff from Student Services. A supporter will not normally act as an advocate.

Yours sincerely

Pathway Leader

APPENDIX 3B

BARNSELEY COLLEGE HIGHER EDUCATION

NOTICE OF ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

I **(name)**, **(state position within the college)**, give this statement in connection with an allegation that: **(name/s of student/s)** registered on **(course and year of study)** breached the Academic Misconduct Regulations of Barnsley College by **(details of the allegation)**.

Title of module: _____

Date coursework due to be submitted (if applicable): _____

Date coursework submitted (if applicable): _____

Date and time of exam / test (if applicable): _____

The events relating to this allegation are:

(Please see guidelines over the page on how to complete this section)

GUIDELINES FOR COMPLETING NOTICE OF ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT FORM

The notice of academic misconduct should be completed by the Pathway Leader and passed to the HE Academic Registrar.

If the notice is in relation to a **coursework related offence** the following are guidelines of the main points that should be covered in the statement.

- Explain your involvement clearly and in full detail i.e. what date the coursework was handed out, what advice on plagiarism was provided to students e.g. via course handbooks or other means.
- Detail events in chronological order.
- Cross-reference any relevant documents that support your statement and allegation.
- For repeated cases of poor academic practice, highlight the previous work where marks and feedback reflect the poor practice (attach the feedback sheets).

If the notice is in relation to an **exam related offence** the following are guidelines of the main points that should be covered in the statement.

- Invigilators' remarks at start of the exam e.g. were students warned that dictionaries or electronic devices etc. were not allowed, that desks would be checked, whether the exam was open book or not, that students should declare at that point if they were unsure if they were about to infringe the rules.
- How the alleged deception was uncovered.
- Any specific observations about the student(s) behaviour.
- At what point during the exam the alleged offence occurred.
- What action was taken when the alleged offence was uncovered e.g. confirmation that the answer booklet was removed and a fresh one given or any conversation with the student outside the exam room about the allegation.
- What the student was told about the next steps etc.
- Cross-reference any relevant documents that support your statement and allegation.

When completing these statements please remember that:

- Anyone reading this notice, when finished should be left with a full understanding of the allegation and easily able to identify the relevant documents and charge.
- Allegations must be evidenced.
- Earlier offences should not be included at this stage unless to exclude it could result in endangering members of the college community.

APPENDIX 3C - LETTER INVITING STUDENT TO ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT PANEL MEETING

FIRST CLASS AND RECORDED DELIVERY

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

Date :

Dear **(name)**

Allegation of Academic Misconduct – **(specify plagiarism or other academic offence)**

I am writing to advise you that an allegation of academic misconduct has been made against you. This concerns your assessment for **(title of module)**. I attach a copy of the HE Academic Misconduct Policy and the report from your Pathway Leader.

You are required to attend a meeting of the Academic Misconduct Panel to discuss the above allegation. The meeting will take place on **(date)** at **(time)** in **(venue)**. Please telephone my office on **01226 216xxx** to confirm that you will be attending. Failure to attend the interview will be considered acceptance of the allegation and the appropriate penalty will be applied.

If you intend to provide any documents or evidence to support your case please bring them to the meeting with you. If you wish to submit mitigating circumstances as to why this happened it must be provided at the meeting with supporting evidence.

You are entitled to bring a supporter with you to the interview, normally a representative from the Students' Union, another student, a member of academic staff or a member of staff from Student Services. A supporter will not normally act as an advocate.

Yours sincerely

HE Academic Registrar

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APPENDIX 3D - LETTER INFORMING STUDENT OF ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT PANEL DECISION

FIRST CLASS AND RECORDED DELIVERY

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

Date:

Dear **(name)**

Thank you for attending the Academic Misconduct Panel meeting today related to an allegation of academic misconduct in **(title of module)**.

The decision of the Panel was that the allegation was upheld / dismissed*.

* [Upheld] The penalty to be applied, in line with the standard Barnsley College Higher Education Tariff of Penalties, is:

- **(state penalty from Tariff of Penalties)**

* [Dismissed] No further action will be taken regarding this allegation. I would however advise you to take advantage of the Study Support available to you at the college in completing future assignments.

I enclose the notes of the meeting and would be grateful if you could sign these to confirm they are a correct record of the meeting and return to **(address)** by **(date)**.

If you wish to appeal against the decision you must do so within 28 working days to the Vice Principal (Quality).

Yours sincerely

HE Academic Registrar

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* delete as appropriate