



CENTRAL SUSSEX COLLEGE

Plagiarism and Academic Misconduct Policy

Ref.
Effective

Student 13.3
01/07/09

POLICY STATEMENT

The College takes breaches of academic conduct very seriously. It is an offence and a breach of the College Code of Conduct for any student to be guilty of, or party to, attempting to commit or committing collusion, plagiarism, or any other misconduct in an examination or in the preparation of work which is submitted for assessment. Allegations will be investigated using standardised procedures. Clear guidelines will be provided to help reduce the practice.

REASONS FOR THE POLICY

This policy has been developed to meet the expectations of partner providers, and all staff and students need to clearly understand the College position on plagiarism and academic misconduct.

POLICY OBJECTIVES

- To make explicit the position of the College on plagiarism and academic misconduct.
- To put into place measures to detect and to reduce the practice.
- To provide a procedure for considering suspected plagiarism or academic misconduct.

POLICY

- All allegations of academic misconduct will be investigated according to the following procedures. These procedures cover all students at all sites.
- A case of academic misconduct must be established before an Examination Board considers the effect of the allegation on a student's progression or achievement.
- For higher education (HE) programmes separate arrangements apply, which are documented in the Plagiarism and Academic Misconduct Procedures for HE Programmes and include specific procedures for each HE programme.
- Disciplinary proceedings arising from a case of academic misconduct will be instituted and conducted in accordance with the Disciplinary Policy for Students.
- A guide and induction will be provided to raise the awareness of students on the issues and regulations in order to reduce plagiarism and academic misconduct.

DEFINITIONS

Plagiarism: When someone attempts to pass off someone else's work, either intentionally or unintentionally, as their own in order to gain some benefit. To copy sentences, phrases, pieces of work (ideas, images, designs) or even striking expressions without acknowledgement of the source (either by inadequate citation or failure to indicate verbatim quotations), is plagiarism. Where copying or paraphrasing occurs each such instance must be referred specifically to its source. Verbatim quotations must be either in inverted commas, or indented, and directly acknowledged. This includes copying material off the internet.

Copyright: This gives the creators of certain kinds of material rights to control ways their material can be used. These rights start as soon as the material is recorded in writing or in any other way. If a student copies someone else's work then the creator would be entitled to take civil action in the courts against that student for breach of copyright.

There are other types of academic misconduct which are also not acceptable in learning institutions, the following list is not exhaustive but covers most types of academic misconduct:

Collusion: The preparation or production of work jointly with another person or persons unless explicitly permitted by the lecturer/examiner. An act of collusion is understood to encompass those who actively assist others as well as those who derive benefit from others, i.e. a student allowing their work to be copied by another student.

Fabrication of results or data in practical or project work.

Misconduct in Examinations: This includes having access, or attempting to gain access, during an examination, to any books, memoranda, notes, unauthorised calculators, or any other material, except such as may have been supplied by the invigilator or authorised by official university bodies. It also includes copying from another student during an exam with or without them realising, aiding or attempting to aid another student, or obtaining or attempting to obtain aid from another student, or any other communication within the Examination Room.

Personation: Where one person assumes the identity of another with the intention of gaining unfair advantage for that person.

Ghosting: Where a student submits as their own, work that has been done as a whole or in part by another person on their behalf, or deliberately makes available or seeks to make available material to another student with the intention that the material is to be used by the other student to commit academic misconduct. For example, downloading a whole essay from a cheat site or buying an essay from a ghost writing service or another student.

RELATED POLICIES

Disciplinary Policy for Students.
Assessment Policy.

PROCEDURES

Procedures for Investigating Plagiarism and Academic Misconduct are contained in Appendix 1. Plagiarism and Academic Misconduct Procedures for HE Programmes.

CONTACTS

Director of Quality.
Director of Learner Support Services.

WHO SHOULD KNOW ABOUT THIS POLICY

All staff and students.

RESPONSIBILITY

It is the responsibility of all staff to ensure that learners are fully aware of the College policy and procedures.

HISTORY

This policy was adopted on 5 May 2005.
Reviewed and revised June 2007.
Reviewed and revised with minor amendment in June 2009.

Signed Dr R Strutt Date 17 August 2009
Principal

Procedures for Investigating Plagiarism and Academic Misconduct

1. INITIAL PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT IN WORK SUBMITTED FOR ASSESSMENT

Where a member of staff, or an external examiner, suspects academic misconduct in work submitted for assessment, the following procedure should be followed:

- a. Members of staff who suspect that a candidate had committed misconduct in the preparation and/or presentation of their work should take appropriate steps to identify all instances of misconduct in the assessment exercise and highlight these for easy reference.
- b. The member of staff will report the suspicion to the Course Coordinator or the designated member of staff. The member of staff suspecting the academic misconduct will then investigate the suspicion, judging whether there is reasonable evidence for a written report to be submitted to the Director of Faculty/Vice-Principal Haywards Heath, or nominee. Where an external examiner suspects academic misconduct, he/she should notify the relevant Course Coordinator or the designated member of staff, who will investigate the suspicion.
- c. If reasonable evidence is determined, the alleged academic misconduct should be reported in writing, with any available evidence enclosed, to the Director of Faculty/Vice-Principal Haywards Heath, or nominee, who will assess the relative and potential seriousness of the allegation and decide whether to proceed with the alleged academic misconduct as a minor or major case (section 3).
- d. The Director of Faculty/Vice-Principal Haywards Heath, or nominee, will write to the student, normally within three working days of receipt of the member of staff's report, informing them that a case of alleged academic misconduct has been reported.
- e. An allegation of academic misconduct may be made after the work has been marked and returned to the student.
- f. If the Examination Board is held before the facts are established, the student's result will be 'held'. Where possible the Examination Board should provide a face value mark for the assessment and decisions based on this mark should be minuted by the Examination Board.

2. INITIAL PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT IN AN INVIGILATED EXAMINATION

Where an invigilator in an examination suspects that academic misconduct may have taken place, the following procedure must be used:

- a. If possible, the attention of another invigilator should be drawn to the student's behaviour.
- b. The student will be allowed to continue with the examination having been informed that a full report will be submitted following the examination. Where the student is in possession of, or uses, unauthorised material, such material will be confiscated by the invigilator and submitted with the invigilator's report. At the end of the examination, the student will have his/her attention drawn by the invigilator to the procedures for disciplinary academic misconduct which will be followed.
- c. The invigilator initiating the action must enter a full and detailed account of the evidence, including the student's enrolment number.
- d. The Examination Officer, or nominee, will submit a full report to the Director of Faculty/Vice-Principal Haywards Heath, or nominee, within two working days of the examination, who will assess the relative and potential seriousness of the allegation and decide whether to proceed with the alleged academic misconduct as a minor or major case.
- e. If the Examination Board is held before the facts are established, the student's result will be held. Where possible the Examination Board should provide a face value mark for the assessment and decisions based on this mark should be minuted by the Examination Board.

3. PROCEDURES FOR INVESTIGATING ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

- a. The Director of Faculty/Vice-Principal Haywards Heath, or nominee, considers the initial evidence and determines whether the alleged academic misconduct falls into one of two categories as follows:
 - A **minor** case can be considered one in which the initial evidence suggests unfamiliarity with the assessment regulations.
 - A **major** case can be considered as: one in which there has been a serious breach of assessment regulations; or a repeated minor case.
- b. The student is notified in writing of the outcome of the Director of Faculty's/Vice-Principal Haywards Heath's, or nominee's, assessment of the alleged academic misconduct, details of the nature of the alleged academic misconduct and the subsequent courses of action which follow.
- c. Where the case is assessed to be a **minor** one the student will be invited to attend an investigatory interview with the Director of Faculty/Vice-Principal Haywards Heath, or nominee, and the student's Personal Adviser or a representative from Learner Support Services.
 - If the student admits to the allegation, the student will be formally warned and a record placed on their file;
 - If the student denies the allegation, the procedure for a major case is followed and the student will be invited to attend a Disciplinary Panel hearing.
- d. Where the case is assessed to be a **major** one the student will be invited to attend a Disciplinary Panel hearing.
- e. The College disciplinary procedures will then be followed.
- f. If the Disciplinary Panel finds there is no reasonable evidence of academic misconduct, the process is terminated at this stage and the student absolved of the allegation. The mark/grade given by the assessor for the piece of work will stand and no record will be kept on the student's file. A written report of the Disciplinary Panel's deliberations will be held by the Director of Learner Support Services for the period of one year.
- g. Where the Disciplinary Panel finds reasonable evidence of academic misconduct, or if the student admits that academic misconduct has taken place, the case is upheld and a written report of the Disciplinary Panel's deliberations will be sent to the Chair of the Course Examination Board and a copy sent to the Director of Learner Support Services. The report will include:
 - A statement of the evidence considered by the Disciplinary Panel and the Panel's conclusions.
 - Details of any other cases of proven or admitted academic misconduct in the student's record.
 - A recommendation to the Course Examination Board of the penalty.
- h. A record of the Disciplinary Panel's report will be retained on the student's file and logged in the Examination Board file.
- i. If the Panel decides to recommend a finding of guilty of misconduct, the Chairperson will then move that the Panel agree that a particular penalty be advised to the relevant Examination Board from the following list:
 - A deduction of a proportion of marks for the assessment exercise(s) or unit(s).
 - Imposing a zero mark for the unit(s) concerned.
 - Reduction of the overall mean by up to 10%.
 - A reduction of one or more classes/categories of degree/grades (where relevant).
 - Disqualification from the award.
- j. The Director of Learner Support Services will report the outcome of the Disciplinary Panel in writing to the student (s), within five working days of the Disciplinary Panel hearing and where necessary, advise the student(s) that the final outcome of any penalty will be determined by the Course Examination Board. The student should then be given the opportunity to declare academic misconduct in other work which they have submitted for assessment. The student(s) has no right of appeal at this stage of the procedures.

4. ACTION BY COURSE EXAMINATION BOARDS

- a. The Course Examination Board receives the report from the Disciplinary Panel and decides on the action to be taken, appropriate to the seriousness of the case. The Course Examination Board may accept the recommendation of the Disciplinary Panel or may use its discretion to consider alternative penalties. This includes the power to:
 - Fail the student for all or part of the module/unit where academic misconduct has been found to have occurred or the assessment stage as a whole.
 - Determine whether the student should be allowed to continue on the course with or without reassessment.
 - Determine whether the student should withdraw from the course.
- b. The Chair of the Examination Board will notify the Director of Learner Support Services of all cases of academic misconduct including the penalty applied at the Course Examination Board and will notify the student, in writing of the final decision.
- c. When allegations of academic misconduct come to light after the Course Examination Board meeting the Board will be reconvened as soon as possible following the report from the Disciplinary Panel or the Panel's report will be received at the next appropriate Course Examination Board.

5. EXTERNAL EXAMINERS

The Director of Faculty/Vice-Principal Haywards Heath, or nominee, and Chair of the Examination Board may consult the external examiner at any stage of an investigation into a case of alleged academic misconduct.

6. MONITORING OF CONSISTENCY OF ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT PROCEDURES

The Director of Learner Support Services will submit an annual report to the Curriculum and Quality Council, which will be used to monitor the consistency and handling of academic misconduct and penalties imposed. For HE programmes a report will be sent to the HE Working Group.

7. STUDENT'S RIGHT OF APPEAL

The student has a right to request a review of an Examination Board decision, in accordance with the College's appeals procedure (see Appendix 2 of the Assessment Policy).

8. INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS

- a. To raise awareness of plagiarism and to reduce its practice, a plagiarism awareness guide will be provided to students and College tutorial units will also be available for study; these will both form important parts of the induction process for all courses.
- b. Students will be provided with a copy of the regulations for academic misconduct.

9. JISC PLAGIARISM DETECTION SERVICE

If it is suspected that a candidate has misused on-line sources, staff should consult the Director of ILT who can submit the exercise for scrutiny using the JISC Plagiarism Detection Service. However, this method of investigation cannot be used if:

- The exercise has not been submitted in an electronic format alongside the printed copy; *and*
- The student involved has not formally and explicitly consented to their work being submitted.

Signed A Hynes Date 27 September 2007
Director of Quality