



## **Academic Misconduct Policy**

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## 1. General

Academic misconduct is defined as any improper activity or behavior by a student which may give that student, or another student, an unpermitted academic advantage in a summative assessment. In investigating and dealing with cases of suspected misconduct, the college will follow the approved policies and processes/

1.1. The College takes a serious view of all acts of academic misconduct. Such acts are considered dishonest and as attempts to gain unfair advantage. Acts of academic misconduct can take many forms. They are likely to fall into one or more of the following categories:

- Plagiarism - taking the work of another person or source and using it as if it were one's own
- Self-plagiarism (or double submission) – resubmitting previously submitted work on one or more occasions (without proper acknowledgement) including work submitted for credits at a previous institution
- Collusion - working with others on tasks that should be carried out on an individual basis
- Falsifying experimental or other investigative results
- Taking unauthorised material (including electronic devices) into an examination
- Contracting another person to produce a piece of assessed work
- Producing a piece of assessed work for another person
- Copying from, or communicating with, another examination candidate during an examination

1.2. The College has a responsibility to take appropriate steps to make students aware of the nature of academic misconduct, particularly during their first year of study, but also periodically thereafter. However, it is the responsibility of students individually to ensure that they sufficiently understand what is involved. The College regards this as an essential part of the learning process and does not accept ignorance as a defence.

1.3. Dissertations and any form of assessment submission must carry a signed pro-forma statement that the student understands the nature of academic misconduct, is aware of the College's policy and confirms that what is submitted is all their own work.

1.4. The following statement should be used by teaching staff on their assessment submission cover sheets or on the assessment/question paper if a cover sheet is not used:

“Work which is submitted for assessment must be your own work. All students should note that the College has a formal policy on academic misconduct which can be found on VLE.”

- 1.5. All instances of academic misconduct in exams, class tests and all other assignments will be considered together, and will count cumulatively in the application of the set penalties

## **2. Plagiarisms**

### 2.1. Definitions

To plagiarise is to represent as one's own the intellectual property of another. The Online Oxford English Dictionary definition of plagiarism is as follows:

“the practice of taking someone else's work or ideas and passing them off as one's own”

Accordingly, the reproduction in a submitted assignment of another's work without due acknowledgement is plagiarism since the writer is presenting as original work what is in fact copying. When the assignment is submitted for assessment, plagiarism is the equivalent of cheating in an examination.

Such unacknowledged indebtedness is plagiarism whether the source is reproduced word-for-word or is paraphrased. It is plagiarism whether the passage is brief or extensive, and whether the source is printed, electronic or hand-written.

Self-plagiarism can arise from a student using his or her own previous work. Self-plagiarism includes using work that has already been submitted for assessment at this university or for any other academic award and is treated as plagiarism.

### 2.2. Due Acknowledgement

2.2.1 It is not sufficient merely to list a source in an appended bibliography, or in the body of an assignment to express a general indebtedness. To avoid plagiarism, all sources must be specifically, precisely and accurately referenced in accordance with good academic practice.

2.2.2 When a source is directly quoted word-for-word, the passage quoted should be placed within quotation marks or indented and the source accurately referenced, in parenthesis, in a footnote, or in an endnote, according to a recognised system. There must be no ambiguity about where the quotation ends or begins.

2.2.3 The source of any data cited (e.g. figures, tables, charts) should be made explicit. When ideas, or an argument, are reproduced from a source in a general or paraphrased way, the source must be acknowledged. When submitted work is dependent upon a lecture or tutorial for its argument, this fact must be acknowledged.

2.2.4 In the case of group work submitted for assessment, the relevant module information will make clear whether the submission is collective or individual. In the case of a collective submission, indebtedness to sources must be acknowledged in the usual way, but it is not necessary for work to be attributed to individual members of the group. In the case of individual submissions resulting from group or collaborative work, it is the responsibility of each individual student to make sure that the submission is his or her own work. Acknowledgement should be made to the contribution of other members of the group when this is drawn upon.

## **2.3. Procedures**

2.3.1 All students in all years of study for all modules are allowed open access to the College's approved plagiarism detection software with multiple submissions on all text based assignments.

2.3.2 Final copies of all text based assignments must be submitted through the VLE I by the due date for that assignment. (. In case of an off-line submission, students are required to provide the module leader with the softcopy the assessment (e.g. code-listing, etc.) within seven working days following the submission date for plagiarism check purposes.)

2.3.3 Formal procedures should be instituted against a student where the relevant unacknowledged source can be established or there is evidence from the student's previous portfolio of work (including assignments and examination scripts) that work is not the student's own. 2.3.4 The formal procedures requires that the student should be invited to attend a meeting with the Examination Officer and the module leader. The student may be accompanied by a person of their choosing. The purpose of the meeting is to confirm the occurrence of plagiarism and the classification of the offence, explain the penalty system, and counsel the student about all forms of plagiarism. It is not the business of the meeting to seek to determine motivation. An Academic Misconduct Report Form should be completed and submitted by the examination officer within one week of the meeting. Submitting the form attaches it to an e-mail which is sent to the student as a record of the meeting and also to the admin office so that the offence can be recorded and the appropriate penalty applied. The admin officer will inform both the student and the module leader of the final penalty to be applied.

2.3.5 The failure of the student(s) to attend this meeting does not prevent the examination officer from taking appropriate action in accordance with this policy. Where a student has documented good cause for being unable to attend the proposed meeting, but indicates that they wish to attend, a suitable revised meeting date must be arranged.

2.3.6 All instances of proven plagiarism should be notified to the relevant Board of Examiners.

2.3.5 The same procedure is followed in cases where two or more students submit similar or identical work. However, it is recognised that in such cases, whilst the fact of plagiarism is clear, it may not have been possible to determine culpability prior to the meeting. In such cases, the meeting itself will serve as a forum in which to establish the facts and determine culpability.

## **2.4. Penalties**

2.4.1 The general principle is that the penalty should be appropriate to the scale of the offence.

2.4.2 When a first offence occurs for students in their first year of study at The Ada College for Digital Skills, and two or more assessments are submitted simultaneously or in close succession, the student must be counselled about the first offence, have time to take this on board and rectify their poor academic practice in subsequent assessments before a second penalty can be applied. For all other simultaneous offences in all other years, these cases should be reported to the College, who will determine the penalty to be applied.

2. 4.3 Where it becomes apparent to the Examinations Office that a student in their first year of study at Ada College has been penalised for plagiarism on different modules in the same semester, the Examinations Officer will inform the leader of the module to which the penalty will apply and will also report this to the Board of Examiners. The assignment with the later due date will be counted as a second or subsequent offence. The Examinations Officer will inform the student of the decision.

2. 4.4 The Examinations Officer will refer cases that reach the trigger points, set out in the table of penalties, to the Registry. A student required to withdraw from registration for the degree will be entitled to any award for which he or she is qualified.

2.4.5 Normally a student may be permitted to repeat or substitute a module which has been failed because of a penalty for plagiarism, if that failure precludes the student from graduating.

2.4.6 Normally a student may be permitted to resubmit their dissertation which has been failed because of a penalty for plagiarism (up to a maximum of 15 penalty points). The resubmission would be on the existing topic and the mark would be capped at 50.

2.4.7 In a case where two or more students submit similar or identical work and culpability cannot be established, the penalty shall be applied equally to both students.

2.4.8 All decisions relating to academic misconduct are communicated to the student by Student Administration via the student's college e-mail account.

2.4.9 The College has based its penalties for academic misconduct on the work undertaken by plagiarismadvice.org and the AMBeR project. Penalties listed below, relate to a points-based tariff system to ensure consistency and fairness in the handling of academic misconduct.

#### **AMOUNT / EXTENT**

Below 5% AND less than two sentences: 80 points

Between 5% and 20% OR more than two sentences but not more than two paragraphs: 105 points

Between 20% and 50% OR more than two paragraphs but not more than five paragraphs : 130 points

Above 50% OR more than five paragraphs: 160 points

#### *Points Available Penalties*

280 – 329 • No further action beyond formal warning

330 – 379 • Assignment awarded 0% - resubmission required, with no penalty on mark

380 – 479 • Assignment awarded 0% - resubmission required but mark capped or reduced

480 – 524 • Module awarded 0% - re-sit required, but mark capped or reduced

525 – 559

- Award classification reduced
- Qualification reduced (e.g. Honours -> no Honours)
- Expelled from institution but credits retained
- Expelled from institution with credits withdrawn

560+

- Qualification reduced (e.g. Honours -> no Honours)
- Expelled from institution but credits retained
- Expelled from institution with credits withdrawn

### 3. Examinations and Class Tests

3.1 The Regulations on Examination Procedures state “that to make use of unfair means in any College examination or test, or to assist another student to make use of such unfair means is an academic offence”.

3.2 The use of scrap paper within the examination room is not permitted. Candidates may make any rough notes in the booklets provided by the College in the examination room. Any other paper, or other such material that may contain notes or prompts of any sort on a candidate’s desk or person, will be identified as unauthorised. Possession of unauthorised material is classed as academic misconduct.

3.3 Unless authorised, possession or use of mobile phones and other electronic devices in the examination room, or during a respite break from an examination room, is strictly prohibited.

3.4 If an invigilator suspects irregularity in the conduct of a candidate within, or during a respite break from, the examination room, the invigilator will inform the candidate, remove any possible prohibited material and endorse the candidate’s answer book. The candidate will be allowed to complete the examination and at the end of the examination the invigilator will inform the candidate that, in accordance with exam regulations,

3.5 A report will be made to the Examinations Office to include a record of observed usage of prohibited material, and that the student will be called to a meeting at a later date. Personal electronic equipment should be returned to the candidate at the end of the examination. In the event that the student refuses to hand over the prohibited material, the student will be asked to leave the examination. Invigilators should ensure that there is minimal disruption to other examinees.

3.6 The College Examinations Office shall receive a report from the invigilator as soon as possible after the event, and instances of academic misconduct will be recorded on the College’s Register.

3.7 In all cases of infringement the student should be invited to attend a meeting with the Examination Officer and one other member of staff. The student may be accompanied by a person of their choosing. The purpose of the meeting is to confirm the academic misconduct and the classification of the offence, explain the penalty system and counsel the student about all forms of academic misconduct. It is not the business of the meeting to seek to determine motivation. An Academic Misconduct Report Form should be completed and submitted by the Examination Officer, within one week of the meeting. Submitting the form attaches it to an e-mail which is sent to the student as a record of the meeting and also to Registry so that the offence can be recorded and the appropriate penalty applied. Registry will inform both the student and the module leader of the final penalty to be applied. All instances should be notified to the relevant board of examiners.

3.8 The failure of the student to attend this meeting does not prevent the Examination Officer from taking appropriate action in accordance with this policy. Where a student has documented good cause for being unable to attend the proposed meeting, but indicates that they wish to attend, a suitable revised meeting date must be arranged.

Version	Author	Date	Updated items
V1	Farhad Keissarian	10 March 2017	N/A
V2	Farhad keissarian	10 March 2020	Section 2.4