Academic Misconduct
Policy and Procedure

It is the policy of Myerscough College to prevent academic misconduct through effective education and communication with its student body. Where such offences are detected it is the College's policy to deal with them in a fair but rigorous manner.

This policy and procedure is applicable to all students at all centres of Myerscough College.

Definitions:

Academic misconduct is defined as any action or attempted action by a student which gives or has the potential to give an unfair advantage in an assessment, or might assist another student to gain an unfair advantage or otherwise undermines the academic integrity of the College.

The College regards any form of academic misconduct as a serious offence. Such offences can include, without limitation:

Cheating

Cheating is defined a form of examination malpractice relating to formal invigilated examinations or other assessments. Examples of cheating include without limitation:

- Communicating with another candidate during an examination
- Communicating with any other person other than an authorised invigilator or other member of staff during an examination
- Copying or attempting to copy from another candidate during an examination
- Possession of any written or printed materials during an examination, unless expressly permitted by the examination regulations
- Possession of any electronically stored information or accessing any information via a network during an examination, unless expressly permitted by the examination regulations
- Use of any information, communication, technology device e.g. mobile phone, watch or calculator during an examination, unless expressly permitted by the examination regulations
- Substitution of examination materials
- Impersonation e.g. where a student arranges for someone else to impersonate them or impersonates another person in an examination, test or hearing
- Gaining or attempting to gain access to unauthorised assessment materials in advance of the specified time, unless expressly permitted by the examination regulations
- Obtaining a copy of a written examination paper in advance of the date and time for its authorised release.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism occurs where a student copies words or ideas from another person and presents those words or ideas as their own in an assessment without properly acknowledging and citing the source(s). Examples of plagiarism include without limitation:

- The inclusion in a student's work of another's work whether published or not without proper acknowledgement
- The substantial summarising of another's work without proper acknowledgement
- The substantial and unauthorised use of the ideas of another person without proper acknowledgement.

Re-presentation of Work

Re-presentation of work occurs where a student submits the same work in full or in part, that they have previously submitted for academic credit, where this is not expressly permitted by the assessment brief.

Collusion

Collusion is an attempt to deceive the examiners by disguising the true authorship of an assessed piece of work in full or in part. Examples of collusion include without limitation:

- Where student A copies, or imitates in close detail, student B's work
- Where two or more students divide the elements of an assignment among themselves, and copy, or imitate in close detail, one another's answers.

All students involved will be regarded as jointly liable in cases of collusion. It is also an offence of collusion to allow one's work to be copied or imitated in close detail. Students should take reasonable steps to safeguard their work, data and hardware from improper use by others.

Collusion should not be confused with the normal situation in which students learn from one another, sharing ideas, as they generate the knowledge and understanding necessary for each of them successfully and independently to undertake an assignment or research project. Nor should it be confused with group work on an assignment or research project where this is specifically authorised.

Commissioning of Assessed Work

Commissioning occurs where a student commissions a third party to complete all or part of an assessed piece of work and then submits it as their own. Commissioned work may be pre-written or specifically prepared for the student. It might be obtained from a company or an individual and may or may not involve a financial transaction. It includes the use of essay mills or buying work on-line or the use of a proof-reading service that includes re-writing the original assessed piece of work. Where it is suspected that a student has submitted work that has not been written by them, the student may be asked questions about the work during the investigation to give them the opportunity to demonstrate appropriate knowledge of the subject matter and that they understand the content of the work. Students must keep copies of drafts and other materials used in researching and preparing the work.

Falsification and Fabrication of Data

Falsification of data occurs where data, evidence or experimental results are altered or enhanced. Fabrication of data occurs where a student creates data, results or other outputs and presents them as if they were real.

Ethical Breaches

Ethical breaches may occur where there is a failure to comply with College research and ethics policies and procedures, including conducting research and data collection without prior ethical approval from the College.

Students should ensure that they are familiar with the ethical policies of the College and their particular discipline area.

Any Other Attempt to Deceive

Any other deliberate attempt to deceive, including offering a bribe to any member of staff or external person who is connected to the College.

Detection

For higher education, student work may be submitted electronically to Turnitin UK which is a web-based system that provides comprehensive checking of submitted work for matching text on web pages, electronic journals and previously submitted student work. Turnitin is promoted as both an education and detection tool. Turnitin UK generates an Originality Report to facilitate the identification of potential plagiarism cases. The Originality Report can be used as evidence and to support the related decision-making process.

Procedure

1. **Higher Education**

    For all instances of academic misconduct relating to higher education, the academic regulations and procedures of the validating university (UCLAN) are followed. The key information and procedures are in the UCLan academic Regulations, section G and the UCLan Assessment Handbook, section 6.

    In addition to the above, information for higher education students regarding academic misconduct is published in Student Handbooks.

    The University Academic Misconduct procedure identifies 4 categories under which academic misconduct may be investigated and associated penalties may be imposed.

    Category 1: Poor Academic Practice

    Poor academic practice falls short of academic misconduct and normally occurs where a student has attempted but failed to adopt good academic practice. It is normally the result of a failure to understand the required protocols and is most likely to occur at an early stage in the course and form a relatively small part of the individual student's assessed work.

    Examples of poor academic practice include inadequate referencing, omitting to include quotation marks or gaps in the reference list. The College will apply academic judgment in determining whether poor academic practice or academic misconduct has occurred.

    Category 2: Academic Misconduct

    Category 2 academic misconduct will normally be defined as a first instance of academic misconduct. Where there is evidence of academic misconduct in multiple assignments that were submitted at the same time within the same cycle of assessment(s), this will normally be treated as a single occurrence.

Category 3: Academic Misconduct

Category 3 academic misconduct will normally be defined as a repeat offence of academic misconduct in any form, where the student has previously incurred a penalty and a warning for academic misconduct, and where the repeat instance occurs in a subsequent cycle of assessment(s).

Category 4: Gross Academic Misconduct

Category 4 will normally be defined as gross academic misconduct where a clear intent to deceive and gain an unfair academic advantage can be established. Examples of category 4 gross academic misconduct may include, for example, a repeat instance of category 3 academic misconduct in any form, commissioning of assessed work or fabrication or falsification of data.

Alleged cases of academic misconduct will be reported to the with the Assistant Principal Higher Education for investigation. The academic misconduct will be considered by the Assistant Principal Higher Education at the College (or their nominee) as detailed in the UCLan Academic Misconduct Procedure.

2.   **Further Education**

Where a case of academic misconduct in relation to an assessment comes to light, the assessment must be suspended and assessors must not come to a decision on the candidate's result.

Where evidence of academic misconduct becomes apparent subsequent to the recommendation of the assessors, the matter will be re-opened and the original decision may be set aside if appropriate.

2.1   Alleged acts of academic misconduct will be reported to the respective Head of Learning Area, Head of Centre and/or Assistant Principal FE for investigation.

2.2   The Head of Area will investigate the matter and give the student the opportunity to put their case forward for consideration. The student maybe accompanied by a friend who may, for example, be a member of the Students Union or a Student Counsellor or a parent/guardian. The Head of Learning Area and the Assessor who alleges that academic misconduct has taken place will present evidence to the student to explain.

2.3   If the allegation is found to be proven the Head of Area will decide an appropriate grade/penalty for the assessment and this will be reported at the FE Performance Board. Given the seriousness of the offence, the matter can result in a warning being issued, as deemed appropriate under the Myerscough Positive Behaviour Policy and Procedure.

2.4   There is provision for an appeal and this should be made to the Assistant Principal in writing, within seven days. The Assistant Principal may increase or decrease the sanction, or annul it if the allegation is not substantiated.

2.5   Where the student accepts the decision the Head of Area be reported the issue to the Assistant Principal FE. The Head of Learning Area is responsible for ensuring that any sanction is imposed upon the student.

Documents Associated with this Policy:

Internal Documents:

- Positive Behaviour Policy and Procedure
- Student's Charter

External Documents:

- QAA UK Quality Code for Higher Education
- QAA Academic Integrity Charter
- UCLan Academic Regulations
- UCLan Assessment Handbook
- UCLan Academic Misconduct Procedure

Document History			
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Quality Assurance	
This Policy and Procedure maps to the following external quality assurance frameworks	

Framework	Framework Section Reference(s)
Education Inspection Framework	
MATRIX	
QAA	QAA UK Quality Code for Higher Education
QIA	
ESFA	

Key Changes to Document
Change of title from Unfair Means to Enhance Performance and minor amendments

All Myerscough College Policies are subject to screening for Equality Impact Assessment

Equality Impact Assessments are carried out to see whether the policy has, or is likely to have, a negative impact on grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, marriage or civil partnership, sex or sexual orientation

Myerscough College not only fulfils its legal position in relation to current and future equality legislation, but additionally goes beyond compliance in providing and promoting "Opportunities for all to succeed", free from any aspect of discrimination, harassment or victimisation.

All staff have a duty of care to look after the interests of and support their colleagues. This policy takes account of our commitment to eliminating discrimination, identifying and removing barriers and providing equal opportunities for our learners, staff and visitors to ensure that no one feels excluded or disadvantaged.

Safeguarding, Learner Protection and Prevent

All staff have a responsibility to support and promote the College's commitment to providing a safe environment for students, staff and visitors. Additionally, all staff have a responsibility to report any safeguarding or Prevent issues to the Designated Senior Lead for Safeguarding and Prevent.