



University of  
Chester

Academic Integrity

SECTION

6

**Quality and Standards Manual**

# **HANDBOOK F:**

## **The Assessment of Students at Levels 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and Taught Provision at Level 8**

**2018 – 2019**

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- 6A(ii) Covering letter for allegation of a breach of the Academic Integrity Policy
- 6B(i) Form AI-2, Record of Departmental Investigation
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- 6C Form AI-0, Marking and Moderation of Work in Breach of the Academic Integrity Policy
- 6D Conduct of a *viva voce* examination
- 6E Academic integrity and examinations (inc. form AI-EX)
- 6F Academic Integrity Course (Standard Penalty)
- 6H Transitional arrangements

During the 2018/19 academic year, the majority of responsibilities held by the Dean of Academic Quality & Enhancement will be discharged to the Head of Academic Quality and Standards, Ian Britton. For further information, please contact [i.britton@chester.ac.uk](mailto:i.britton@chester.ac.uk)

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## SECTION 6 – ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

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The University of Chester values its students' contribution to the necessary quality of its academic standards and awards by adhering to the principles of academic integrity and fair play in assessment. These standards are upheld when students, completing work for assessment, act honestly and take responsibility for the fair presentation of the contents of any work they produce for assessment. This means that students will do nothing that has the potential for them to gain an unfair advantage in assessment.

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### PART A: ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY

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#### 1. Maintaining Academic Integrity

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- 1.1. In order to adhere to the University's definition of academic integrity, students are expected to abide by the following conventions when completing work for assessment:
  - 1.1.1. Acknowledge all sources of information, knowledge and ideas used when completing work for assessment by consistently and correctly using an acceptable referencing system;
  - 1.1.2. Produce work that is the product of their own, individual efforts. An exception to this is where an assignment brief specifically requires a single piece of work be submitted on behalf of a group of students.
  - 1.1.3. Declare when they have used work before in a previous assessment (whether successful or not) using an acceptable referencing system;
  - 1.1.4. Present accurate information and data that has been obtained appropriately and which is a fair representation of their own endeavours, knowledge and understanding;
  - 1.1.5. Adhere to and comply with all applicable regulatory, legal and professional obligations and ethical requirements therein.

- 1.2. The University will make information on how to maintain academic integrity available to students in ways that are appropriate and accessible. However, at all times, it is the sole responsibility of the student to act in a way that is consistent with the Academic Integrity Policy and to seek advice and guidance if they are unclear.

## 2. Breaches of Academic Integrity

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- 2.1. A student will be regarded as being in breach of the Academic Integrity Policy if they act or behave in a manner that is inconsistent with the University's general definition of academic integrity or the specific statements given in 1.1.
- 2.2. A breach of the Academic Integrity Policy may occur when a student knowingly acts in a way that is contrary to the policy or does so inadvertently by means of careless scholarship. Inexperience, intention, lack of intention or unfamiliarity with the Academic Integrity Policy will not be regarded as a defence in the event that the policy is breached.
- 2.3. Any breach of the Academic Integrity Policy will be categorised as either unacceptable academic practice or academic misconduct. These are dealt with in different ways according to the published procedure described in Part B onwards.
- 2.4. Examples of unacceptable academic practice:
  - 2.4.1. **Plagiarism:** the use of ideas, intellectual property or work of others without acknowledgement or, where relevant, permission.
  - 2.4.2. **Reuse of previously submitted material:** the use of work, without appropriate referencing, that has been submitted for assessment, whether successful or not, by the same student in this University or any other institution. This will not apply where a student is making a resubmission for the same assessment component in the same module, unless specifically prohibited in the assessment information.
  - 2.4.3. **Collusion:** the unauthorised collaboration between two or more students resulting in the submission of work that is unreasonably similar, but which is submitted as being the product of the submitting student's individual efforts.
- 2.5. Examples of academic misconduct include:
  - 2.5.1. **Commissioning:** engaging another person or organisation to complete or undertake an assessment, whether a financial transaction has taken place or not.

- 2.5.2. **Falsification:** the presentation of fictitious or distorted documents, data, evidence or any other material, including submitting the work of another person as if it is their own. This includes the submission of false evidence in an application to the Mitigating Circumstances Board or to the Academic Appeals Board.
- 2.5.3. **Research misconduct:** failure to obtain ethical approval for a research project or failure to comply with regulatory, legal and professional obligations for research projects.
- 2.5.4. **Cheating:** any action before, during or after an assessment or examination which has the potential for the student to gain an unfair advantage in assessment or assists another student to do so. This includes failure to adhere to the examination regulations.
- 2.6. These lists are not exhaustive and the Academic Integrity Policy might be breached in ways not specifically referred to here.
- 2.7. The University will take steps to detect potential breaches of the Academic Integrity Policy which might not be immediately apparent when work is marked anonymously. Following completion of the marking process, once marks have been de-anonymised, the Chair of the Module Assessment Board might authorise a *viva voce*. The purpose of this will be to confirm the authenticity of the work that has been submitted.
- 2.8. Suspected breaches of the Academic Integrity Policy will be initially investigated by the relevant Chair of the Module Assessment Board in accordance with the published procedure described in Part B onwards.
- 2.9. Except in the case of unacceptable academic practice by students studying at Level 3 or Level 4, a breach of the Academic Integrity Policy can only be confirmed by the Academic Integrity Review Panel or its subgroup.

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## PART B: OVERVIEW OF PROCEDURE

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### 3. Introduction

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- 3.1. The University of Chester expects that when completing work for assessment, students will act honestly and take responsibility for the contents of the work that they produce. This means that students must adhere to the University's Academic Integrity Policy and do nothing that has the potential for them to gain an unfair advantage in assessment.
- 3.2. Where a tutor responsible for marking work suspects that a student has produced work that breaches the Academic Integrity Policy, they have an obligation to report it for investigation. This ensures that:
  - 3.2.1. Marks and academic credit are awarded for work which accurately demonstrates the true efforts and abilities of the student;
  - 3.2.2. The efforts of students who have not breached the Academic Integrity Policy are recognised by ensuring that those who have produced work by unfair means are not advantaged for doing so; and
  - 3.2.3. Employers and members of the public can have confidence that everyone who holds a University of Chester award has undergone a rigorous assessment process and has achieved an award that reflects their true knowledge and ability.
- 3.3. Throughout this procedure, where reference is made to a specific post-holder, the line manager of that post-holder may nominate another person to act instead.
- 3.4. Throughout this procedure, where reference is made to a particular timescale, it is given in calendar days. Where communications are sent via email no later than 4pm Monday-Friday, they will be deemed to have been received the same day.

### 4. Roles, Rights and Responsibilities

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- 4.1. The University accepts that when a student is accused of submitting work that breaches the Academic Integrity Policy, they might find the process stressful. The University undertakes to minimise any distress caused to the student by:
  - 4.1.1. Dealing with the matter as quickly as possible, whilst ensuring that this procedure is followed correctly;
  - 4.1.2. At every stage, giving clear information about the procedure and the role that the student is expected to take;

- 4.1.3. Recognising that breaches of academic integrity relate to pieces of assessment and are not judgements about the character of the individual student involved; and
    - 4.1.4. Arriving at an outcome that is just, proportionate and, where appropriate, takes into account the individual circumstances of the student.
  - 4.2. To ensure that each case is dealt with fairly, different people will be involved at each stage. These are referred to throughout the procedure. Some of the key figures involved are:
    - 4.2.1. The Examiner: this is the tutor who is responsible for marking assessment submissions;
    - 4.2.2. The Monitor: this is another tutor who will review the assessment submission and agree a mark to be released, if the student is eligible to receive a mark at the end of the procedure.
    - 4.2.3. Chair of the Module Assessment Board: this is usually the Head of Department (or equivalent) who is responsible for making an allegation, conducting a meeting with the student and choosing whether to refer the matter on. The Chair of the Module Assessment Board can also nominate other members of academic staff to undertake this role for them. Reference in this procedure to the Chair of the Module Assessment Board should be taken to refer to their nominee where another person is appointed to act instead.
    - 4.2.4. Academic Quality Support Services (AQSS): the Student Affairs team in AQSS is responsible for administering this procedure once allegations are sent from departments.
- 4.3. In some cases, for students at Level 3 or Level 4, the Chair of the Module Assessment Board is able to make a decision that a piece of work is in breach of the Academic Integrity Policy without the matter being considered by the Academic Integrity Review Panel. However, a student is allowed to ask for a review of that decision if they have good reason to do so.
- 4.4. For students at Level 5 or higher, only the Academic Integrity Review Panel or its subgroup is able to make a decision that a piece of work is in breach of the Academic Integrity Policy. Before this happens, the student will have the right to present a defence.
- 4.5. To ensure that the procedure is handled as efficiently as possible, after an initial allegation has been made, all other communication will normally be sent to the student's University of Chester email address only. It is the responsibility of each student to check their email account regularly.
- 4.6. When determining whether or not a piece of work is in breach of the Academic Integrity Policy, the University does not take into consideration whether or not the student concerned acted deliberately.

- 4.7. Where a piece of work found to be in breach of the Academic Integrity Policy is nevertheless eligible for marking, it is the responsibility of the Chair of the Module Assessment Board to ensure that this is done so in accordance with Handbook F, Section 5 of the Quality and Standards Manual.
- 4.8. In all circumstances, where an allegation of a breach of the Academic Integrity Policy is found to have been proven, the student shall not normally be permitted a deferral of the assessment component.
- 4.9. At the point of submitting an application to the Mitigating Circumstances Board, students will be advised that a proven breach of the Academic Integrity Policy in the assessment component(s) for which they are claiming mitigation will normally override any decision of the Mitigating Circumstances Board to approve the claim.

## 5. Categorisation and Recording Breaches of the Academic Integrity Policy

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- 5.1. In order to deal appropriately with the different ways in which the Academic Integrity Policy might be breached, each allegation will be provisionally categorised. The assigned category will be determined by the nature of the suspected breach.
- 5.2. The following will normally be categorised as **unacceptable academic practice**:
  - 5.2.1. Plagiarism
  - 5.2.2. Reuse of previously submitted work
  - 5.2.3. Collusion
- 5.3. The following will normally be categorised as **academic misconduct**:
  - 5.3.1. Commissioning
  - 5.3.2. Falsification
  - 5.3.3. Research misconduct
  - 5.3.4. Failure to abide by the examination regulations
  - 5.3.5. Cheating or other types of dishonesty

- 5.4. Other acts, not specifically listed here, might also be regarded as breaches of the Academic Integrity Policy. Where this happens, the Chair of the Module Assessment Board may take advice from the Senior Assistant Registrar (Student Affairs) before making a decision about the provisional category.
- 5.5. In the case of students registered at Level 3 or Level 4, the Chair of the Module Assessment Board can decide that a student has breached the Academic Integrity Policy by means of unacceptable academic practice only. In all other cases, although advised by the provisional categorisation, the final decision rests with the Academic Integrity Review Panel.
- 5.6. Allegations of breaches of the Academic Integrity Policy that are confirmed proven will be recorded as academic offences. Details of allegations and recorded offences will be held electronically by AQSS. Registry will hold details of recorded offences and any penalties applied.
- 5.7. In the event that a student has multiple cases brought against them at Level 5 or higher, any previous offences of unacceptable academic practice will be considered as either spent or unspent for the purposes of determining an appropriate penalty. Offences that are spent will not be considered as factors when determining a penalty for any further breaches of the Academic Integrity Policy by means of unacceptable academic practice.
  - 5.7.1. Offences of unacceptable academic practice relating to assessments at Level 3 or Level 4 will be regarded as spent when the student starts study at Level 5.
  - 5.7.2. One initial offence of unacceptable academic practice at Level 5 or higher, where the student was eligible for a standard penalty, will be regarded as spent if the student successfully completes the Academic Integrity Course (see clause 15).
  - 5.7.3. All other offences will be considered unspent.
- 5.8. If a student withdraws from the University, or signals their intention to withdraw, before an allegation of a breach of the Academic Integrity Policy has been resolved, the matter will continue to be investigated in accordance with this procedure. The purpose of this will be to determine what, if any mark, should appear on the former student's transcript for the assessment concerned.

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## PART C: ACADEMIC DEPARTMENT PROCEDURE (COURSEWORK)

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### 6. Identifying a Suspected Breach of the Academic Integrity Policy

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- 6.1. **This clause does not apply where work submitted for a Level 3 or Level 4 module is suspected of breaching the Academic Integrity Policy by means of unacceptable academic practice (plagiarism, reuse of previously submitted material or collusion only). In these cases, clauses 8 and 9 apply.**
- 6.2. Where the examiner believes that there is evidence that a piece of work is in breach of the Academic Integrity Policy, they will make a report to the Chair of the Module Assessment Board by submitting form AI-1 *Suspected Breach of the Academic Integrity Policy* at appendix 6a(i). This will detail the suspected breach and be accompanied by evidence.
- 6.3. If the examiner suspects that the student may have submitted work that has been completed by someone else, but where there is no documentary evidence to substantiate this, the examiner should consult with the Chair of the Module Assessment Board. Where necessary, the student may be required to attend a *viva voce* (see clause 7).
- 6.4. If the Chair of the Mitigating Circumstances Board, the Deputy Registrar or nominee or the Senior Assistant Registrar (Student Affairs) suspects that documents submitted in support of an application for mitigating circumstances or an Academic Appeal may have been falsified or fabricated, they may make some limited investigations in order to verify the authenticity of those documents. If, having undertaken these investigations, they suspect that the student might be in breach of the Academic Integrity Policy, using form AI-1 they will make a report to the relevant Chair of the Module Assessment Board who will deal with the matter as if a suspected breach had been referred by the examiner.
- 6.5. No mark will be disclosed to the student. However, if the suspicion arises after a provisional mark has been disclosed, this will not constitute a procedural irregularity. Where provisional marks have been entered onto electronic student systems, they should normally be removed while the matter is investigated.
- 6.6. The Chair of the Module Assessment Board will review the report from the examiner and decide whether to investigate the matter further.
- 6.7. If the Chair of the Module Assessment Board decides that there is no case to answer, they will give reasons to the examiner. The examiner will then complete the assessment according to the normal process.

- 6.8. If the Chair of the Module Assessment Board decides that the matter should be investigated further they will:
- 6.8.1. Write to the student (by post and email), to notify them of the allegation and invite them to attend a meeting to discuss it. A template for this purpose is given at appendix 6a(ii).
    - 6.8.1.1. The time and date of the meeting will be at the discretion of the Chair of the Module Assessment Board but will normally take place no sooner than 7 days after the allegation has been sent and no later than 21 days after.
    - 6.8.1.2. The letter inviting the student to the meeting will be accompanied by a copy of the AI-1 form and the evidence being relied upon.
    - 6.8.1.3. The student can attend the meeting with another registered student of the University or by an officer of Chester Students' Union if they wish.
- 6.9. The purpose of the meeting will be to assist the Chair of the Module Assessment Board in their investigation to establish whether it is reasonable to suspect that the student's work breaches the Academic Integrity Policy. Where appropriate, it may also be taken as an opportunity to talk to the student about approaches to good academic practice.
- 6.10. If the student does not attend the meeting, it should not be delayed. Instead the Chair of the Module Assessment Board should decide on an outcome to their investigation in the student's absence.

## 7. Use of a *Viva Voce*

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- 7.1. If the examiner suspects that a student may have submitted work that has been completed by someone else, but there is no documentary evidence, they may ask the Chair of the Module Assessment Board to authorise a *viva voce*. This is similar to an oral examination and gives the examiner the opportunity to talk to the student about the contents of the work.
- 7.2. If a *viva voce* is required, it is regarded as a continuation of the assessment. Its only purpose will be to help to decide whether, on the balance of probabilities, the student is the author of the work that they have submitted.
- 7.3. The *viva voce* will be conducted in accordance with the procedure set out at appendix 6d.

- 7.4. Under no circumstances will an allegation of a breach of the Academic Integrity Policy be put formally to a student during or immediately following the conduct of a *viva voce*. Instead, a report of the *viva voce* must be sent to the Chair of the Module Assessment Board, who will decide whether to conduct an investigation into a possible breach of the Academic Integrity Policy and follow the procedure set out in clause 6.
- 7.5. If the student fails to attend a *viva voce* the Chair of the Module Assessment Board may draw any conclusion from this that they wish when deciding whether to conduct an investigation.

## 8. Unacceptable academic practice at Level 3 and Level 4 only

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- 8.1. If the examiner believes that work submitted for a Level 3 or Level 4 module breaches the Academic Integrity Policy by means of unacceptable academic practice (plagiarism, reuse of previously submitted material or collusion), they should continue to mark the work, but shall disregard those elements that they believe constitute the breach. The provisional mark will be based on the remainder of the work, which the examiner believes to have been produced by fair means, and with reference to the applicable marking criteria.
- 8.2. The examiner should markup the submission to show which parts of it have been disregarded and give feedback as appropriate.
- 8.3. The examiner must complete form AI-X *Level 3 or Level 4 unacceptable academic practice*. This form confirms that the mark has been affected by a breach of the Academic Integrity Policy and gives a brief description of the suspected breach.
- 8.4. The AI-X form should be submitted to the Chair of the Module Assessment Board with a copy of the work and any other evidence required to substantiate the breach of the Academic Integrity Policy.
- 8.5. The Chair of the Module Assessment Board will act as monitor and decide either:
  - 8.5.1. That the submission **does** breach the Academic Integrity Policy by means of unacceptable practice and that they should be warned as to their future conduct; or
  - 8.5.2. That the submission breaches the Academic Integrity Policy, but suspects academic misconduct; or
  - 8.5.3. That the submission **does not** breach the Academic Integrity Policy.

- 8.6. Where the Chair of the Module Assessment Board decides that the submission **does** breach the Academic Integrity Policy by means of unacceptable academic practice, they will:
- 8.6.1. Make provision for the student to have a meeting with a member of staff from the department to discuss the case and support to aid their development of good academic practice;
  - 8.6.2. Send a copy of the AI-X form to the student which shall act as a warning as to their future conduct and invite them to a meeting;
  - 8.6.3. Act to agree an appropriate provisional mark that should be awarded for the work; and
  - 8.6.4. Following the date of the meeting with the student, send a copy of the AI-X form to AQSS for statistical monitoring.
- 8.7. Where the Chair of the Module Assessment Board suspects that the submission breaches the Academic Integrity Policy, but by means of academic misconduct, they will follow the procedure set out in clauses 6, 7 and 10 as applicable.
- 8.8. Where the Chair of the Module Assessment Board decides that the submission **does not** breach the Academic Integrity Policy, they should give reasons to the examiner and instruct that the work is marked in its entirety in the normal way. All paperwork relating to the case will be destroyed.

## 9. Independent Review Mechanism (Level 3 or Level 4 only)

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- 9.1. In the case of a student registered at Level 3 or Level 4, the Chair of the Module Assessment Board can decide that the Academic Integrity Policy has been breached by means of unacceptable academic practice without the matter being referred to the Academic Integrity Review Panel. However, the student may request an independent review of that decision.
- 9.2. Within 7 days of the date that the AI-X form was signed by the Chair of the Module Assessment Board, a student who wishes to dispute the decision may email [academicintegrity@chester.ac.uk](mailto:academicintegrity@chester.ac.uk) to request a review. Such a request will only be considered if, in the opinion of the Dean of Academic Quality and Enhancement or nominee, the following criteria have been met:
- 9.2.1. The student attended a meeting with the Chair of the Module Assessment Board arranged to discuss the matter; and
  - 9.2.2. The student advances a reasonable case for their disagreement with the finding. Statements that the Chair of the Module Assessment Board was simply mistaken in their decision without a compelling explanation will not be admissible.

- 9.3. Where the Dean of Academic Quality and Enhancement or nominee is satisfied that the criteria to request a review have been met, the case file (all forms and evidence) will be sent to a Chair of the Academic Integrity Review Panel who has had no involvement in the case and who is independent of any department hosting the student's programme of study.
- 9.4. The Chair of the Academic Integrity Review Panel may, if they wish, interview the student, the Chair of the Module Assessment Board and/or the referring examiner.
- 9.5. The decision of the Chair of the Academic Integrity Review Panel will be final and binding on all parties. It will be communicated in writing normally no later than 28 days following the request for a review.

## 10. Departmental Meeting with Students

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- 10.1. During the meeting the Chair of the Module Assessment Board will complete form AI-2 *Record of Departmental Investigation* at appendix 6b(i). If the student does not attend the meeting, this form should be completed in their absence and sent to the student via their University of Chester email address.
- 10.2. If the outcome of the investigation by the Chair of the Module Assessment Board is that the student's work does not breach the Academic Integrity Policy:
  - 10.2.1. The form AI-2 will be completed and a copy provided to the student;
  - 10.2.2. The examiner will be informed and given a reason for the decision. The examiner will then complete the assessment according to the normal process; and
  - 10.2.3. All paperwork relating to the case will be destroyed.
- 10.3. If the outcome of the investigation by the Chair of the Module Assessment Board is that the student's work might be in breach of the Academic Integrity Policy:
  - 10.3.1. The form AI-2 will be completed and a copy provided to the student; and
  - 10.3.2. A copy of forms AI-1 and AI-2 and the accompanying evidence will be sent to Academic Quality Support Services and the case will be referred to the Academic Integrity Review Panel (see parts E and F).

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## **PART D: ACADEMIC DEPARTMENT PROCEDURE (EXAMINATIONS)**

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### **11. Definition of an Examination**

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- 11.1. For the purpose of this procedure, an examination will be regarded as a timed assessment which students are expected to undergo at a specific time and place, notified beforehand, and conducted in accordance with the rules set out in Handbook F, Section 4. This may include class tests.
- 11.2. Notwithstanding 11.1., other assessments may be regarded as an examination, depending on the context of a specific discipline. Where it may not be immediately clear that an assessment is an examination, the Chair of the Module Assessment Board will, if required, take advice from the Senior Assistant Registrar (Student Affairs) and determine whether Part C or Part D of this procedure will apply.

### **12. Suspecting a Breach of the Academic Integrity Policy**

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- 12.1. If an invigilator suspects that a candidate may be in breach of the Academic Integrity Policy during an examination they will:
- 12.1.1. (If no other candidates are being disturbed) permit the candidate to continue with the examination. However, they will immediately require another invigilator to act as a witness. Where unauthorised materials are identified, they will be removed if possible. The script (or equivalent) will be endorsed by the invigilator at the point that the suspected breach is believed to have occurred. The front cover of the script (or equivalent) will also be endorsed. In a practical examination, the point at which the breach was suspected will be noted.
- 12.1.2. (If other candidates are being, or may be, disturbed) the candidate will be required to withdraw from the examination room. The script (or equivalent) will be endorsed and it will be noted that the candidate's examination was terminated. The chief invigilator should extend the examination by a length of time equivalent to deal with the disturbance. At the conclusion of the examination, the matter should be reported to the Deputy Registrar.
- 12.2. The invigilator will require the candidate to report to them at the end of the examination when there will be a meeting with an individual appointed by the Deputy Registrar or the Chair of the Module Assessment Board for this purpose and who will be known as the Examinations Officer.
- 12.3. The Examinations Officer will make a written record of the circumstances and retain any relevant materials. They will require the invigilator to make a written report, normally within three days.

- 12.4. Where it is not practical to retain any relevant materials, appropriate notes detailing their nature and reasons why they could not be retained should be made. If possible and appropriate, photographic evidence may also be gathered.
- 12.5. Normally within four days of receiving the invigilator's report, the Examinations Officer will complete form AI-EX at appendix 6e and submit it, with the invigilator's report and any retained materials to the relevant Chair of the Module Assessment Board.
- 12.6. Normally within ten days of receiving the Examination Officer's submission, the Chair of the Module Assessment Board will determine whether there exists, *prima facie*, evidence that the candidate might have breached the Academic Integrity Policy. They may, if they wish, choose to interview the candidate and/or the invigilator before making such a determination.
- 12.7. If the Chair of the Module Assessment Board determines that there is insufficient evidence, they will decide that no breach of the Academic Integrity Policy has occurred. In this situation, they will instruct either:
  - 12.7.1. That the candidate's script is marked in accordance with the relevant procedures; or
  - 12.7.2. That the candidate's assessment is deferred.
- 12.8. If the Chair of the Module Assessment Board determines that there is *prima facie* evidence that the candidate might have breached the Academic Integrity Policy they will refer the matter to AQSS. They will prepare the following case file:
  - 12.8.1. A brief report, outlining the reasons for the decision and a request that the matter be considered by the Academic Integrity Review Panel;
  - 12.8.2. The full submission received from the Examinations Officer; and
  - 12.8.3. Any relevant correspondence between the candidate and the department in relation to the matter.
- 12.9. All suspected breaches of the Academic Integrity Policy arising from an examination will be provisionally regarded as academic misconduct.
- 12.10. Where a student submits an application for mitigating circumstances or makes an Academic Appeal in relation to an examination and there is suspicion that documents

submitted in support of this may have been falsified or fabricated, clause 6.3. of this procedure applies.

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## PART E: STANDARD PENALTY

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### 13. Determination of Eligibility for a Standard Penalty

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- 13.1. Once the case file has been received by AQSS, the Senior Assistant Registrar (Student Affairs) or nominee, will decide whether the student is eligible for consideration of a standard penalty. Eligibility will be confirmed where **all** of the following criteria are met:
- 13.1.1. The provisional categorisation of the suspected breach of the Academic Integrity Policy is by unacceptable academic practice only;
  - 13.1.2. The student has not previously been found to have breached the Academic Integrity Policy, in either category, at Level 5 or higher;
  - 13.1.3. The student has indicated that they accept the outcome of the investigation by the Chair of the Module Assessment Board, or they failed to respond within 7 days of the date given on the AI-2 form; and
  - 13.1.4. If required, the student would normally be entitled to a further attempt at the assessment.
- 13.2. Where all of the criteria at 13.1. apply, the case will be referred to a subgroup of the Academic Integrity Review Panel for consideration.
- 13.3. Where one, or more, of the criteria at 13.1. do not apply, the case will be referred to a full hearing of the Academic Integrity Review Panel for consideration and part F of this procedure will apply.

### 14. Subgroup of the Academic Integrity Review Panel

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- 14.1. A subgroup of the Academic Integrity Review Panel will meet to consider cases which meet all of the criteria given at 13.1.
- 14.2. The subgroup will consist of a Chair of the Academic Integrity Review Panel and the Dean of Academic Quality and Enhancement or nominee. The Senior Assistant Registrar (Student Affairs) or nominee will act as procedural advisor.
- 14.3. If a member of the subgroup has had any prior involvement in a case presented, this must be declared and the case will be deferred to the next meeting.

- 14.4. A student whose case has been referred to the subgroup will not have the right to attend the meeting.
- 14.5. The subgroup will review the case file and the recommendation that the student is eligible for consideration of a standard penalty and satisfy itself that:
  - 14.5.1. Sufficient evidence has been presented which demonstrates that the student has breached the Academic Integrity Policy by means of unacceptable academic practice; and
  - 14.5.2. The recommendation that the student is eligible for consideration of a standard penalty is correct.
- 14.6. Where the subgroup satisfies itself in relation to the points at 14.5. it will act on behalf of the Chair of the Module Assessment Board and authorise the issuing of a standard penalty in accordance with the provisions of section 15.
- 14.7. Where the subgroup cannot satisfy itself in relation to the points at 14.5. it will refer the matter to a full hearing of the Academic Integrity Review Panel and part F of this procedure will apply.
- 14.8. The decision of the subgroup will be communicated to the student via their University of Chester email address, and to the Chair of the Module Assessment Board, normally within 14 days.

## 15. Application of a Standard Penalty

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- 15.1. Once the subgroup has authorised the issuing of a standard penalty, AQSS will email the student to explain that they are required to complete the Academic Integrity Course within 21 days in accordance with appendix 6f of this procedure.
- 15.2. Following notification to the student, AQSS will email the Chair of the Module Assessment Board who will be asked to ensure that a mark, based on those elements which the examiner decides have been produced by fair means, is determined. The work must be marked and moderated in accordance with the requirements of Handbook F, Section 5 and a provisional mark sent to AQSS using form AI-0. AQSS will state a deadline for the return of the form.
- 15.3. If the student successfully completes the Academic Integrity Course, they will be notified of the mark for the assessment as given on the AI-0 form, which will be provisional until ratified by the Module Assessment Board. The offence will be considered spent in the event of any future proven breaches of the Academic Integrity Policy by means of unacceptable academic practice.

- 15.4. If the student fails to successfully complete the Academic Integrity Course, they will fail, with a mark of zero, the assessment component concerned. The offence will be considered unspent in the event of any future proven breaches of the Academic Integrity Policy.
- 15.5. If the student fails to attempt the Academic Integrity Course by the stipulated deadline, they will fail, with a mark of zero, all assessment components in the module concerned. The student will be entitled to one reassessment opportunity. If a third assessment attempt is required, this will be at the discretion of the relevant Assessment Board. The offence will be considered unspent in the event of any future proven breaches of the Academic Integrity Policy.
- 15.6. For the avoidance of doubt, a student will be deemed to have attempted the Academic Integrity Course once they have accessed the timed test component.
- 15.7. If the student successfully completes the Academic Integrity Course after the Module Assessment Board has met, the Chair of the Module Assessment Board will be responsible for ensuring that the correct assessment procedures are adhered to in order to confirm the mark to be awarded.

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## PART F: ACADEMIC INTEGRITY REVIEW PANEL

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### 16. Scope and Composition of the Academic Integrity Review Panel

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- 16.1. The Academic Integrity Review Panel (the Panel) will meet to hear all allegations which cannot be resolved by the subgroup. This will include:
- 16.1.1. Allegations of breaches of the Academic Integrity Policy provisionally categorised as academic misconduct.
  - 16.1.2. Allegations of breaches of the Academic Integrity Policy categorised as unacceptable academic practice, where the student has any previous offences recorded against them.
  - 16.1.3. Allegations which are disputed by the student, irrespective of the provisional categorisation.
- 16.2. The Panel will consist of a Chair and two members drawn from a pool and in accordance with the following:
- 16.2.1. **Chairs of the Panel** will be nominated by Faculty Deans and nominations approved by the Dean of Academic Quality and Enhancement on behalf of Academic Quality and Enhancement Committee. Nominees will normally be at the level of either head or deputy head of department.
  - 16.2.2. **Members of the Panel** will be nominated by Heads of Department and nominations approved by the Dean of Academic Quality and Enhancement on behalf of Academic Quality and Enhancement Committee. Nominees must be members of academic staff who possess relevant experience and expertise.
- 16.3. The Senior Assistant Registrar (Student Affairs) will appoint a procedural advisor to the Panel. In addition to giving regulatory advice, the advisor will be responsible for maintaining an accurate record of the meeting.
- 16.4. The Chair of the Module Assessment Board or nominee who referred the allegation for consideration will normally be asked to attend the hearing to present the case.
- 16.5. The University reserves the right to involve such other individuals in the hearing as it sees fit.
- 16.6. When convening the Panel, the Senior Assistant Registrar (Student Affairs) will try to ensure, as far as possible, that it is academically independent of the student whose case is to be heard. This will normally be achieved by the following:
- 16.6.1. At least one of the Panel members will be independent of the Faculty from which the allegation originates; and

16.6.2. The Panel will not contain anyone who has been involved in the teaching or assessment of the student in the module to which the allegation refers.

16.7. Staff and students have the opportunity to present their case in writing and in person to the Panel. Other than through these channels, neither students, staff nor any other individual may seek to influence the Panel or in any other way seek to sway the operation of these procedures in relation to a case that has been submitted or which may be submitted in future. Doing so is likely to lead to the deferral of the case and a report being made to the Dean of Academic Quality and Enhancement for further action.

## 17. Scheduling and Notification

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17.1. As far as possible, cases identified for hearing by the Panel will be scheduled for the next available meeting, whilst making sure that the provisions of 16.6. are adhered to.

17.2. AQSS will send the student an invitation to attend the hearing at least 7 days before it takes place. The invitation will include the date, time and location of the hearing. This will be sent to the student's University email account only.

17.3. The invitation letter from AQSS will tell the student about their right to attend the hearing. It will also explain that the student has the right to submit a written statement if they want to.

17.4. The invitation letter from AQSS will explain that the student can bring someone with them to the hearing if they want. That person must be a member of the University of Chester: it can be another student or an officer of Chester Students' Union. If the student is under 18, they can also be accompanied by a parent or guardian.

17.5. If a copy of the evidence for the case was not sent with the invitation from AQSS, the student will receive it at least 2 days before the hearing. The evidence will be exactly what was sent to AQSS by the Chair of the Module Assessment Board.

17.6. If any more evidence is presented after the file has been sent to the student, or if it becomes available during the hearing, the University will still consider it as part of the case. However, if this happens, the hearing will be postponed until the student has had a chance to look at the new evidence and respond to it.

## 18. Requests to Defer a Hearing

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18.1. In order to resolve cases as quickly as possible, the Panel may be convened to hear cases at any point in the year, including during vacation periods. Where a hearing has been scheduled during term time a student can request a deferral of their case on one occasion only, for one of the following reasons:

- 18.1.1. A clash with a scheduled teaching session or assessment.
  - 18.1.2. A clash with a scheduled field trip or with work placement.
  - 18.1.3. A clash with another academic requirement.
  - 18.1.4. Illness of the student, or someone for whom the student has a caring responsibility.
  - 18.1.5. Work commitments (unless the student is part-time, this can only be cited outside of term time weeks).
- 18.2. In the case of 18.1.1 – 18.1.3. the request must be made no less than 3 days prior to the hearing and be accompanied by written confirmation from an appropriate member of academic staff.
- 18.3. In the case of 18.1.4. where the student cannot give notice in advance, a request for a deferral must be made as soon as possible following the hearing and, in every case, within no more than 3 days. It must also be accompanied by a valid medical certificate.
- 18.4. If the Panel meets on a date outside of term time weeks, in addition to the reasons listed in 18.1., a deferral may also be requested on the grounds of a pre-booked holiday.
- 18.5. Requests to defer a hearing should be made by email to the Senior Assistant Registrar (Student Affairs). The process for doing this will be given in the invitation letter.

## 19. Conduct of Hearings of the Academic Integrity Review Panel

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- 19.1. If the student fails to arrive at the hearing by the time given in their invitation letter, and they have not had a request to defer the hearing approved, the hearing will go ahead in their absence.
- 19.2. Prior to the hearing, the members of the Panel will have received a copy of the case file submitted to AQSS by the Chair of the Module Assessment Board or nominee. In addition, the Panel may take into consideration the following when deciding an appropriate outcome:
- 19.2.1. Any written statements from the student which were not included in the case file;
  - 19.2.2. Any oral statements that the student wishes to make to the Panel at the hearing and any oral statements made by anyone who accompanies the student to the hearing; and

- 19.2.3. Any oral statements from any other relevant sources, including the Chair of the Module Assessment Board who referred the case.
- 19.3. No one else is allowed to attend the hearing on the student's behalf. However, where the student is accompanied to the hearing, the Chair of the Panel may invite that person to make a statement. That statement must be limited to general support of the student and their circumstances. The person accompanying the student is not permitted to answer questions posed to the student by the Panel.
- 19.4. The hearing will be conducted in two parts:
- 19.4.1. In the first part the student, anyone accompanying them and the Chair of the Module Assessment Board or nominee will be present. The purpose of this part of the hearing will be to present the evidence to the student, to hear the student's response and any requests for mitigation. This part of the hearing will normally be audio recorded.
- 19.4.2. The second part of the hearing will be conducted in private with only the Panel members and the procedural advisor present. The purpose of this part will be for the Panel to review the evidence presented both in writing and during the first part of the hearing and to consider an appropriate outcome. A written record of this part of the hearing will be made.

## 20. Decisions of the Academic Integrity Review Panel

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- 20.1. The outcome of the hearing will consist of:
- 20.1.1. A decision about whether the student's work has breached the Academic Integrity Policy; and, if the Panel decides that a breach of the policy has occurred:
- 20.1.2. Whether that breach of the Academic Integrity Policy is by means of unacceptable academic practice or academic misconduct; and
- 20.1.3. What penalty should be applied.
- 20.2. If the Panel decides that the student's work does not breach the Academic Integrity Policy, the matter will be referred back to the Chair of the Module Assessment Board who will instruct the examiner to complete the assessment in accordance with the normal procedures.

## 21. Penalties for Unacceptable Academic Practice

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- 21.1. If the Panel determines that the student's work has breached the Academic Integrity Policy by means of unacceptable academic practice, the procedural advisor will

inform the Panel of any previous offences in either category and whether they are spent or unspent (see 5.7.).

- 21.2. If the student would be entitled to a reassessment opportunity:
  - 21.2.1. Where the student has **no** unspent offences recorded against them, the Panel should refer to penalty group A.
  - 21.2.2. Where the student has **one** unspent offence recorded against them:
    - 21.2.2.1. If the current case contains no more than one proven allegation, the Panel should refer to penalty group B; or
    - 21.2.2.2. If the current case contains two or more proven allegations, the Panel should refer to penalty group C.
  - 21.2.3. Where the student has **two or more** unspent offences recorded against them, the case should be considered in penalty group C.
- 21.3. If the student would not be entitled to a reassessment opportunity, the case must be considered in penalty group C. However, if the student has no unspent offences recorded against them, the provisions at 21.6. apply.
- 21.4. Where the procedural advisor confirms that a student would ordinarily have been eligible for consideration for a standard penalty had they chosen not to contest the case, the Panel may apply 21.8.1. only.
- 21.5. Notwithstanding the provisions of 21.2. the Panel may choose to consider the case in a different penalty stage than the applicable criteria would suggest if it deems that the circumstances of the case warrant it. Where this happens, reasons for doing so will be documented in the record of the hearing. Such reasons may include, but will not be limited to, the following:
  - 21.5.1. Where the student has previously found to have breached the Academic Integrity Policy by means of academic misconduct, the Panel may wish to consider the case in a higher penalty group; or
  - 21.5.2. If there are particular extenuating circumstances either relating to the individual student, the nature of the allegation(s) and/or the presentation of the case, the Panel may, if it chooses, consider the case in a lesser penalty group.
- 21.6. Where a student is found to have breached the Academic Integrity Policy for the first time at Level 5 or higher and that breach has occurred in the final assessment

attempt allowed by the University, the Panel will decide whether it should be considered in penalty group A or penalty group C. The following normally applies:

21.6.1. The Panel may choose to consider the case in penalty group A if **all** of the following criteria hold:

21.6.1.1. The module to which the offence relates permits internal compensation of marks; and

21.6.1.2. The moderated mark recorded on form AI-0 is compensable (i.e. 20 or higher); and

21.6.1.3. Based on information available to the Panel, there is a mathematical chance that the student can pass the module overall if the moderated mark can be awarded.

21.6.2. The Panel must consider the case in penalty group C if **any** of the following criteria hold:

21.6.2.1. The module to which the offence relates does not permit internal compensation of marks; and/or

21.6.2.2. The moderated mark recorded on form AI-0 is not compensable (i.e. 19 or lower); and/or

21.6.2.3. Based on information available to the Panel, there is no mathematical chance that the student can pass the module overall even if the moderated mark can be awarded.

21.7. As far as possible, AQSS will attempt to identify cases that might cause 21.6. to come into effect prior to the hearing. Where this happens, AQSS will liaise with the Chair of the Module Assessment Board to ensure that the correct assessment procedures are adhered to, so that the Panel has access to the information it requires at the hearing.

#### 21.8. **Penalty group A**

The Panel should select from one of the following options. However, the Panel should not normally impose the penalty at 21.8.1. if the student has previously been in receipt of a standard penalty in accordance with part E of this procedure:

21.8.1. The student will be required to complete the Academic Integrity Course within 21 days in accordance with appendix 6f and the provisions at clause 15. will apply; or

21.8.2. The student will fail, with a mark of zero, the component of assessment in which a breach of the Academic Integrity Policy has been proven; or

21.8.3. The student will fail, with a mark of zero, all components of assessment in the module in which a breach of the Academic Integrity Policy has been proven.

#### 21.9. **Penalty group B**

The student will fail, with a mark of zero, all components of assessment in the module in which a breach of the Academic Integrity Policy has been proven; and

21.9.1. The student's final degree classification will be lowered by one class; or

21.9.2. Marks for modules specified by the Panel will be capped at 40; or

21.9.3. Marks for modules specified by the Panel will be set to zero. The student will be entitled to a second or third assessment attempt as appropriate.

#### 21.10. **Penalty group C**

The student will fail, with a mark of zero, all components of assessment in the module in which a breach of the Academic Integrity Policy has been proven; and

21.10.1. The student's programme of study is terminated with immediate effect and they are not permitted to submit any further work for assessment. They will be entitled to an exit award if the total number of credits achieved based on all assessments submitted to date entitles them to one; or

21.10.2. The student's programme of study is terminated with immediate effect and they are not permitted to submit any further work for assessment. All marks for modules not yet ratified by an Assessment Board will be set to zero. They will not be entitled to any award and may not re-enrol at the University for any other programme of study.

## 22. Penalties for Academic Misconduct

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22.1. If the Panel determines that the student has breached the Academic Integrity Policy by means of academic misconduct, the procedural advisor will inform the Panel of any previous offences in either category.

22.2. The Panel will determine an appropriate penalty, taking into account any previous proven breaches of the Academic Integrity Policy (whether by means of unacceptable academic practice or academic misconduct), the number of proven allegations in the current case, the nature and seriousness of the allegations and any extenuating factors.

22.2.1. The Panel will disregard whether any previous offences are spent or unspent.

22.2.2. Where there are multiple allegations in the case, the Panel will normally consider them consecutively.

- 22.3. In every case, the student will fail, with a mark of zero, all components of assessment in the module in which a breach of the Academic Integrity Policy has been proven. **In addition** the Panel will consider applying one of the following:
- 22.3.1. The student's marks for assessment components specified by the Panel will be set to zero. The student will be entitled to a second or third assessment attempt as appropriate; or
  - 22.3.2. The student's final degree classification will be lowered by one class; or
  - 22.3.3. The student's marks for modules specified by the Panel be capped at 40; or
  - 22.3.4. The student's marks for modules specified by the Panel will be set to zero. The student will be entitled to a second or third assessment attempt as appropriate; or
  - 22.3.5. The student's programme of study is terminated with immediate effect and they are not permitted to submit any further work for assessment. They will be entitled to an exit award if the total number of credits achieved based on all assessments submitted to date entitles them to one; or
  - 22.3.6. The student's programme of study is terminated with immediate effect and they are not permitted to submit any further work for assessment. All marks for modules not yet ratified by an Assessment Board will be set to zero. They will not be entitled to any award and may not re-enrol at the University for any other programme of study.

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## PART G: ADMINISTRATION

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### 23. Reporting Outcomes

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- 23.1. The decision of the Panel will be communicated to the student via their University of Chester email account and to the Chair of the Module Assessment Board no later than 14 days after the date of the hearing.
- 23.2. Where the Panel has found that the student has submitted work which breaches the Academic Integrity Policy, that decision and the decision on penalty will be reported to the Deputy Registrar or nominee as follows:
- 23.2.1. In the case of a standard penalty, the Deputy Registrar will be notified after the expiry date of the student's eligibility to complete the Academic Integrity Course. AQSS will advise the outcome in accordance with the provisions of clause 15.
- 23.2.2. In all other cases, the Deputy Registrar will be notified as soon as possible after the conclusion of the hearing.
- 23.3. Any decision on penalty relating to components of assessment and/or module outcomes made by the Panel are binding on the Module Assessment Board.
- 23.3.1. If the Module Assessment Board has not yet met to ratify the student's marks at the time the decision is made, it is the responsibility of the Chair of the Module Assessment Board to enter the penalty decision on the student's record.
- 23.3.2. If the Module Assessment Board has already met to ratify the student's marks at the time the decision is made, Registry will enter the penalty decision on the student's record.
- 23.4. Any decision on penalty relating to the student's programme of study and/or overall award outcome made by the Panel are recommendations to the relevant Awards/Progression Assessment Board.
- 23.4.1. If the Awards/Progression Assessment Board has not yet met to consider the student's eligibility to progress or for an award at the time the decision is made, the recommendation will be reported by the Deputy Registrar at the appropriate time.
- 23.4.2. If the Awards/Progression Assessment Board had already met to consider the student's eligibility to progress or for an award at the time the decision is made, or where it is appropriate to act prior to the next meeting of that Board, the Deputy Registrar will seek to obtain the consent of the Chair of the Board and, where required, the Chief External Examiner, to implement the recommendation of the Panel.

## 24. Appeals Relating to Breaches of the Academic Integrity Policy

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- 24.1. The final decision on whether a piece of work is in breach of the Academic Integrity Policy, whether made by the Chair of the Module Assessment Board (Level 3 or Level 4) or by the Academic Integrity Review Panel or its subgroup (all Levels) will be regarded as an academic judgment.
- 24.2. A student may not appeal against the final decision that a piece of work is in breach of the Academic Integrity Policy solely on the ground of a disagreement with that decision.
- 24.3. Where a student is entitled to receive a mark for a piece of work found to have breached the Academic Integrity Policy that mark represents an academic judgment and may not be the subject of an appeal.
- 24.4. A student is entitled to appeal on the grounds of a procedural or administrative irregularity in the conduct of this procedure. Appeals must be submitted in accordance with Handbook F, Section 10.