

Academic Handbook
Section 2L
Student Academic Misconduct
policy

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PRINCIPLES

1. Solent University is fully committed to helping and supporting students understand the expectations associated with academic writing and provides advice, guidance and self-help material so that students can fully understand what is not acceptable behaviour. Students are expected, with the support provided by the University, to make themselves fully conversant with what constitutes good academic conduct and consequently academic misconduct.
2. The University's approach is developmental rather than punitive, but in order to protect the standard and integrity of its awards, the University will identify any incidence that meets the definition of academic misconduct and will bring this to the attention of the student and where appropriate the University will impose an academic penalty. It is the expectation that students will learn from this experience and any previous offence will be taken into account when determining penalties for subsequent offences. Proven academic misconduct will remain on the student's record for the entire registration period and will include any period of suspension, repeat year or transfer of course.
3. As such, there are no time limits associated with the investigation of suspected academic misconduct and where a case of suspected academic misconduct is identified, including after credit has been given, an award has been made or the student has left the University, the case will be fully investigated.
4. This policy should be read in conjunction with the University's 'Student Academic Misconduct Procedure'.
5. The University will have effective arrangements through the Learning, Teaching and Student Achievement Committee (LTSAC) to monitor, evaluate and improve the effectiveness of its policy and procedure.
6. The University is committed to:-
 - i. The determination of academic misconduct being an academic judgement;
 - ii. Having fair, effective and timely procedures for handling allegations of student academic misconduct;
 - iii. The concept of natural justice, such that students have the right to defend themselves in person against an allegation of academic misconduct and that staff involved in any panels do not have a personal relationship with the student or any involvement in the setting and marking of the work in question;
 - iv. Transparency and equity in terms of penalties imposed for the varying types of misconduct;
 - v. Remedies for academic misconduct being developmental as well as punitive; and
 - vi. Effective monitoring and reporting processes.
7. In allegations of academic misconduct, the burden of proof is upon the University, i.e. it is for the University to prove that academic misconduct has occurred, not for the student to prove that it has not.
8. In determining whether a case is proven or not the standard of proof is on the 'balance of probability' rather than 'beyond all reasonable doubt'.
9. In the most serious cases the University may determine that a student should be withdrawn from their course. In such cases the decision must be approved by the Chair of Academic Board.

10. If academic misconduct in group work is found and it is clear that it was the act of specific member(s) of the group, then the appropriate penalties may be applied to those specific members. If plagiarism is confirmed but it is still unclear who in the group was the originator(s), then all students in the group will have the appropriate penalties applied.
11. Subsequent breaches of the academic misconduct regulations will normally receive a more severe penalty than earlier ones. Normally, a breach will only be deemed sequential if, at the time of committing the second offence, the student could reasonably be assumed to be aware that he or she was committing a second offence.

DEFINITION

12. It is an offence for any student to be party to or commit academic misconduct in an examination or in the preparation of work which is submitted for assessment.
13. The practices listed below will automatically constitute academic misconduct. The list of practices is not exhaustive and does not preclude the University from taking action where other forms of academic misconduct are identified.
 - i. **plagiarism** - “where a student incorporates another person’s or body’s work by unacknowledged quotation, paraphrase, imitation or other device in any work submitted for assessment in a way which suggests that it is the student’s original work”;
 - ii. **collusion** - “Where the student(s) in the same cohort knowingly allows their work to be viewed by another student, in any form, and this work is subsequently incorporated in, or represented as, the work of another student; or, the collaboration without official approval between two or more students in the presentation of work, which is submitted as the work of a single student”;
 - iii. **falsification** - “where the content of any assessed work has been invented or falsely presented by the student as their own work”;
 - iv. **replication** - “where a student submits the same or similar piece of work, or substantial sections of the same work, which has already been submitted for any assessment within the University or elsewhere. Students repeating an assessment, module or level are expected to produce new coursework for all assessments except where the referral brief allows students to re-work a failed assessment”. Students will, therefore, be required to attempt a new piece of work where they are referred in an assessment or repeating assessments as part of a repeat year;
 - v. **taking unauthorised notes or devices into an examination;**
 - vi. **obtaining an unauthorised copy of an examination paper;**
 - vii. **communicating, or trying to communicate, with another student or individual during an examination, or attempting to observe or copy another student’s written and/or electronic examination script;**
 - viii. **providing assessments for the purpose of academic misconduct** - “where a student sells to, writes or provides assessments for another student”;

- ix. being a party to impersonation in relation to an examination;
- x. failure to obtain, or breach of ethical approval, where this is a requirement of the assessment;
- xi. purchasing of essays from a third party;
- xii. submitting a fraudulent Extenuating Circumstances claim.

PREVENTION AND DETECTION

- 14. In order to prevent academic misconduct all students are provided with appropriate guidance on referencing and a full explanation and definition of academic misconduct. The associated rules and regulations are covered as part of student induction and a summary included in student handbooks. The guidance and related policy are also made available through the student portal and students should be reminded throughout their course.
- 15. All students are therefore expected to be fully conversant with the rules and regulations associated with academic misconduct.
- 16. In addition, students are required to confirm that the work submitted for assessment is their own work and has not been previously submitted for credit for another module assessment.
- 17. The University will use all appropriate mechanisms for detecting suspected academic misconduct, including but not limited to, the opinions of academic staff and the use of software packages.
- 18. The University will ensure that suitable briefings are provided for all staff involved in detecting and handling student academic misconduct.