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**Plagiarism and Malpractice Regulations and Procedures**

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PM 1 DEFINITION AND FORMS OF ACADEMIC MALPRACTICE

The University values a culture of honesty and mutual trust (academic integrity) and expects all members of the University to respect and uphold these core values.

Academic malpractice is an academic offence for a candidate to commit any act designed to obtain for himself or herself an unfair advantage with a view to achieving a higher grade or mark than he or she would otherwise secure. Any attempt to convey deceitfully the impression of acquired knowledge, skills, understanding, or credentials, shall represent a contravention of Rule 6 of the University, and may constitute grounds for exclusion.

PM 1.1 CHEATING IN EXAMINATIONS AND CLASS TESTS

Occurs when a candidate communicates, or attempts to communicate, with a fellow candidate or individual who is neither an invigilator or member of staff; copies, or attempts to copy from a fellow candidate; attempts to introduce or consult during the examination or test, any unauthorised printed or written material, or electronic calculating or information storage device; or mobile phones or other communication device, or personates or allows himself or herself to be impersonated.

PM 1.2 COLLUSION

Occurs where a piece of work prepared by a group is represented as if it were the student’s own. This can also occur by enabling a fellow student to obtain academic credit to which they are not entitled. This includes providing material, especially electronic copies of work, or performing all or part of an assigned task so that unfair advantage or credit may be obtained by another student.

PM 1.3 PLAGIARISM

Is understood to include, in whatever format it is presented, including written work, online submissions, group work or oral presentations, the following:

(a) the act of copying or paraphrasing a paper from a source text, whether in manuscript, printed or electronic form, without appropriate acknowledgement (this includes quoting directly from another source with a reference but without quotation marks);

(b) the submission of all or part of another student’s work, whether with or without that student’s knowledge or consent;

(c) the commissioning or use of work by the student which is not his/her own and representing it as if it were;

(d) the submission of all or part of work purchased or obtained from a commercial service;

(e) the submission of all or part of work written by another person, whether by another member of the University or a person who is not a member of the University;
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(f) reproduction of the same or almost identical own work, in full or in part, for more than one module or unit of assessment of the same Lancaster University programme of study;

(g) directly copying from model solutions/answers made available in previous years.

PM 1.4 FABRICATION OR FALSIFICATION OF RESULTS

Occurs when a student claims to have carried out tests, experiments or observations that have not taken place or presents results not supported by the evidence with the object of obtaining an unfair advantage.

PM 2 PROCEDURE IN CASES OF SUSPECTED MALPRACTICE IN UNDERGRADUATE AND POSTGRADUATE EXAMINATIONS

PM 2.1 If a student is suspected of an academic offence under Section PM 1.1, the invigilator shall at once telephone the Head of the Student Registry (or nominee) who will immediately go to the examination venue to investigate and will also inform the University Dean (or the Deputy Dean) or the relevant Academic Officer of the incident. The student will be permitted to continue the particular examination in which he or she is suspected of malpractice, but the invigilator will request that the student remains behind at the end of the examination for interview by the Head of the Student Registry (or nominee), at which a representative of Lancaster University Students’ Union shall be invited to be present and written notes will be made. If after this preliminary interview it is clear that no offence has taken place then the investigating officer(s) shall take no further action. If it is decided to carry out a formal investigation the student shall be informed of this but also told that he or she will be permitted to complete all the examinations he or she would normally take at that stage in his or her course. The invigilator shall, immediately after the examination, provide the Head of the Student Registry with a written report giving full details of the alleged offence and enclosing any material evidence relevant to the case. The report and any material evidence shall be submitted to the Head of the Student Registry, who shall inform the head(s) of the student’s major department(s) and, if different, of the department responsible for the examination.

PM 2.2 On receipt of the report, the University Dean or relevant Academic Officer shall investigate the alleged offence, making such enquiries as he or she sees fit and with access to all relevant documents. The student shall be interviewed and asked whether he or she wishes to say anything or to provide any information relevant to the alleged offence. If after preliminary investigation the University Dean or Academic Officer is not satisfied that there is a prima facie case to answer, he or she shall inform the student and the other parties concerned, and the matter shall end there. If the University Dean or Academic Officer is satisfied that there is a prima facie case to answer, he or she shall formally notify the student in writing of the charge and inform him or her that the case will be referred to the Standing Academic Committee of the Senate.

PM 2.3 Approval by an examination board of a degree classification shall not prevent the reasonable application of retrospective review - see PM 6.
PM 3 PROCEDURE IN CASES OF SUSPECTED MALPRACTICE IN UNDERGRADUATE AND POSTGRADUATE COURSEWORK

PM 3.1 DEFINITION OF ROLES RELATING TO SUSPECTED MALPRACTICE INCLUDING PLAGIARISM IN ASSESSED COURSEWORK AND TESTS

Academic Marker

PM 3.1.1 Each Academic Marker identified as such by a department or equivalent shall be responsible for providing an appropriate mark and feedback for student work. They shall report where appropriate on cases for which they have marking responsibilities to the relevant Academic Officer, and produce evidence in support of such a claim. Where the Academic Marker is not permanently employed by the University in an academic position then these responsibilities shall be upon the named Module Convenor or relevant Head of Department.

Academic Officer

PM 3.1.2 Each department or equivalent shall designate one academic member of staff, to be known as the Academic Officer, who shall take responsibility for the investigation of and subsequent action where appropriate for academic malpractice in coursework at undergraduate and postgraduate levels. The Academic Officer shall include reporting cases of poor academic practice or malpractice and keeping a written record of all cases of alleged academic malpractice.

Student Registry

PM 3.1.3 Student Registry shall be responsible for recording or providing the means for Academic Officers and Academic Markers to record all alleged and detected cases of academic malpractice, including plagiarism in coursework and cheating in examinations. Student Registry shall also provide information and other support to Academic Officers to assist them in discharging their duties; communicating information between departments about academic malpractice as appropriate; and offering assistance and advice to Academic Officers about procedures and best practices.

LU Students’ Union

PM 3.1.4 Any student who is alleged to have been involved in an act of academic malpractice shall have access to LU Students’ Union support and advice at all stages in the procedures that follow, and appropriate LU Students’ Union staff may accompany the student in any meetings or correspondence with the department, an Academic Officer or the Standing Academic Committee.

Standing Academic Committee

PM 3.1.5 The Standing Academic Committee of the Senate shall hear cases:

(i) referred to it by an Academic Officer;
(ii) relating to offences where the student does not accept the decision of the Academic Officer on the grounds of proper procedures having not been followed;
(iii) relating to alleged multiple offences after the Senate deadline for the final submission of coursework (or postgraduate equivalent). The Committee’s decisions shall be informed by the seriousness of the offence rather than by the time of year.

The Committee shall in all instances where it hears a case use the procedures set out in PM 4.

**PM 3.2 PROCEDURES DEALING WITH ACADEMIC MALPRACTICE AND POOR ACADEMIC PRACTICE IN COURSEWORK**

**PM 3.2.1** All academic markers shall make a positive effort to identify poor scholarship practices, plagiarism or academic malpractice, in all assessment items. This is a responsibility of their academic employment and a vital part of delivering the high quality learning experience that students expect.

**PM 3.2.2** Academic markers shall, when concern is identified, use their judgement to decide if some form of poor academic practice or some form of academic malpractice has occurred.

**Dealing with poor academic practice**

**PM 3.2.3** Where it is decided that student work displays some form of poor academic practice but not malpractice the academic marker will deal with this as part of the normal feedback and assessment procedures. The academic judgement of the academic marker may be that the poor academic practice should lead to a significant reduction in the mark awarded. The student must be informed of the nature of the problem and why it is unacceptable and a note of ‘poor academic practice’ shall be recorded by the department in the LUSI Student Record.

**PM 3.2.4** Where the student work displays some form of poor academic practice as above, but the student has not taken note of previous advice of similar problems, then the student must be informed of the repeated problems, be required to meet with their Director of Studies and an ‘academic warning’ shall be recorded by the department in the LUSI Student Record.

**Dealing with academic malpractice**

**PM 3.2.5** Where the Academic Marker believes that academic malpractice in the form of plagiarism has occurred then they may, as prescribed in the University’s Plagiarism Framework, choose to deal with this within the normal feedback and assessment procedures by ‘striking out’ all the plagiarised material and assessing the work on what remains. Where this is done the student must be informed and guided towards appropriate advice. A record of ‘Poor academic practice’ or ‘Minor plagiarism’ or ‘Major plagiarism’ will be recorded by the department in the LUSI Student Record as appropriate. Where the Academic Marker does not believe this is appropriate or suspects that some other form of academic malpractice has occurred then the case should normally be referred to the Academic Officer as the first step in an investigation.
Hearings by the Academic Officer

PM 3.2.6 When informed of a case of possible academic malpractice the Academic Officer shall conduct an investigation of the matter and arrange for a Hearing with the student. The Hearing shall include the Academic Marker and at least one other (non-academic) staff member from the student’s department who should take a record of the Hearing.

Prior to the Hearing
(a) The student should be encouraged to be accompanied by a friend (e.g. a LU Students’ Union representative or College personal tutor).
(b) The student should be able to review any documentary evidence prior to any hearing, including in the case of plagiarism any Turnitin reports or coursework annotated by the Academic Marker.
(c) The Academic Officer shall check in the LUSI Student Record System for any previous offences.

At the Hearing
(a) The student will be asked to respond to the allegations regarding their work and may also wish to consider if there are any exceptional circumstances which should be made known to the Academic Officer.
(b) The Academic Officer may ask the Academic Marker or course convener to present evidence.

Outcomes of a Hearing

PM 3.2.7 The Academic Officer may decide that the appropriate action after hearing any case is that:

(a) no action of any kind will be taken. Where appropriate this may mean that the Academic Marker shall be instructed to mark the work normally;
(b) the matter should be considered as a matter of poor academic practice and dealt with as described in PM 4.2.3 - PM 4.2.4;
(c) the student will be required to submit an alternative piece of work and such work shall be eligible to receive only the minimum pass mark appropriate to the student’s programme of study. If the student refuses or fails to repeat and resubmit the work, a mark of zero or equivalent grade shall be recorded;
(d) that no form of resubmission should be allowed and a mark of zero or equivalent grade should be recorded for the work;
(e) that the case should be referred to the Standing Academic Committee because of its serious nature, or there being repeated offences.

PM 3.2.8 The Academic Officer should inform the student of his/her decision as soon as possible and at latest, in writing within seven days. Where appropriate the record of ‘Poor academic practice’, ‘Plagiarism’ or ‘Academic malpractice’ will be recorded by the department in the LUSI Student Record.

PM 3.2.9 Where multiple offences are discovered after the Senate deadline (or postgraduate taught equivalent) the case shall be referred to the Standing Academic Committee.
PM 3.2.10 If the student does not accept the decision of the Academic Officer, he/she shall have the right to appeal it to the Standing Academic Committee, at which he/she shall have the right to be heard, accompanied by a representative if desired.

PM 4 THE STANDING ACADEMIC COMMITTEE OF THE SENATE

PM 4.1 PURPOSE AND MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMITTEE

PM 4.1.1 The Standing Academic Committee shall investigate all cases of alleged academic malpractice referred to it by the University Dean or relevant Academic Officers and determine whether an academic offence has been committed.

PM 4.1.2 The Standing Academic Committee shall consist of three members (including the Chairperson), each representing a different faculty. In no case may a serving member of the Standing Academic Committee be a member of any of the departments in which the student has studied, or is studying, or be a witness for the Academic Officer or for the student.

PM 4.2 GENERAL PROCEDURES

PM 4.2.1 The procedures of the Standing Academic Committee shall be as follows.

(a) All hearings shall be held in private.

(b) The Committee will be convened with all possible speed. Once the time, date and place of its meeting are known the referred student shall be informed in writing:

(i) that he or she is to be called to a hearing;
(ii) of the nature, date and time of the alleged offence;
(iii) that he or she may present evidence in his or her defence orally at the hearing and/or in writing;
(iv) that he or she may be accompanied by a friend who will normally be a member of the University;
(v) that he or she may call witnesses to support his or her case (whose identity must be notified to the secretary of the Committee prior to the hearing in order that their attendance can be assured).

(c) The Committee shall have the power to adjourn, continue or postpone an investigation at its discretion but shall at all times endeavour to complete its examination of the matter at the earliest opportunity. If the student does not appear on the date and time or at the place appointed, reasonable notice having been given, the Committee may proceed to investigate the matter in his or her absence.

(d) If the student wishes to admit the charge, he or she may do so in writing to the secretary of the Committee. In this event the student will be advised that he or she should still appear before the Committee for the formal presentation of evidence by the University Dean or relevant Academic Officers and for examination of the evidence by the Committee.
If the student wishes to deny the charge, he or she shall so inform the secretary of the Committee once notice of the hearing has been received. If no letter of admission is received, it will be assumed that the charge is denied. The University Dean or relevant Academic Officer shall present the case in person to the Standing Academic Committee.

The Committee may hear evidence in any way it sees fit. This includes the testimony of witnesses, and the production of documents or other relevant material evidence. The University Dean or relevant Academic Officer and the student (or the person accompanying the student) shall be entitled at the hearing to make an opening statement, to give evidence, to call witnesses, to cross examine witnesses and to address the Committee.

The Committee will find the charge proven if all or all but one of its members agree, on the evidence before it, that it is beyond all reasonable doubt that the offence was committed. If the Committee does not find the charge proven, it shall inform the student and all parties concerned immediately, and the matter shall end there. If the Committee finds the charge proven, it may take one of the following courses of action, as appropriate.

**Malpractice in examinations:**

(i) decide that no further action is required;  
(ii) decide that the student to resit the examination in which he or she cheated and if deemed appropriate other examinations or units of assessment;  
(iii) award a mark of 0 or equivalent grade for the examination;  
(iv) award a mark of 0 or equivalent grade for the entire unit of assessment;  
(v) direct that the student be awarded a classification lower than the one derived from the mark profile (after any 0 mark or equivalent grade awarded under (iii) or (iv) has been included);  
(vi) direct that the student be awarded no more than a Pass degree;  
(vii) in addition to one of (ii) to (vi) temporarily exclude the student from the University;  
(viii) permanently exclude the student from the University without a degree;  
(ix) exceptionally not impose a specific penalty, but refer the case to the appropriate board of examiners with a full statement of findings together with suggestions for appropriate action (see PM 4.3).

**Malpractice in coursework:**

The Standing Academic Committee, having considered the evidence shall have the authority to confirm the recommendation for permanent exclusion, subject to PM 4.2.3 or to impose one of the following penalties:

(x) to permit the student to repeat the work, subject to receiving only the minimum pass mark appropriate to the piece of work;  
(xi) to award zero or equivalent grade for the work in question;  
(xii) to award zero or equivalent grade for the whole coursework or dissertation;  
(xiii) to award zero or equivalent grade for the unit or course module;
(xiv) to award zero or equivalent grade as under (iv) and, where the inclusion makes no difference to the class of award, to recommend that one class lower than the one determined by the arithmetic be awarded;
(xv) to exclude the student permanently from the university, where the offence is detected before the final assessment is completed;
(xvi) not to award the degree, where the offence is detected after the final assessment has been completed.

PM 4.2.2 The Standing Academic Committee shall act on behalf of the Senate and the Committee of the Senate, and its decisions (subject to PM 4.2.3) shall be binding on boards of examiners.

PM 4.2.3 Any student excluded either temporarily or permanently under any of PM 4.2.1 (g) shall have the right of appeal using the Academic Appeals procedures.

PM 4.3 PROCEDURE WHERE THE STANDING ACADEMIC COMMITTEE REFERS A CASE OF MALPRACTICE IN AN EXAMINATION TO A BOARD OF EXAMINERS

PM 4.3.1 Any student found by the Standing Academic Committee to be guilty of an academic offence under Section PM 1, and whose case is referred to a board of examiners, shall have the right to submit to the board a written plea in mitigation but he or she shall not have the right to appear or to be represented by another before the board. Boards of examiners have absolute discretion to take into account, in making their decisions, such evidence as they may consider relevant to a student’s academic performance and to decide whether to call for further oral or written evidence. They may also take into account, but shall not be bound by, the suggestions of the Standing Academic Committee. In considering the suggestions of the Standing Academic Committee, the decisions of boards of examiners shall be subject to ratification by the Committee of the Senate.

PM 5 RETROSPECTIVE DETECTION

PM 5.1 Retrospective detection is defined as the discovery of alleged plagiarism or other academic malpractice in work that has been subject to final moderation, including by a relevant board of examiners.

PM 5.2 The University shall reserve the right to review work as defined in PM 6.1 and to apply the appropriate procedures and, where reasonable, the appropriate penalties.

PM 5.3 Where there are reasonable grounds to review work, the relevant Academic Officer shall initiate the process and shall have the right to require the student to resubmit work that has been finally assessed, and to refer the matter to the Standing Academic Committee with a recommended sanction.

PM 5.4 The Standing Academic Committee shall, in addition, have the right to require retrospective review of any assessed work of candidates referred to it under the above procedures.

PM 5.5 Failure by the candidate to produce the required material shall normally be treated by the Standing Academic Committee as leading to the assumption that the material had, in part or in whole, been plagiarised.
PM 6 APPEALS AGAINST PENALTIES FOR ACADEMIC MALPRACTICE

PM 6.1 MALPRACTICE IN UG AND PGT EXAMINATIONS

Where the Committee of Senate or the body or officer with delegated authority from Senate approves the recommendation of a board of examiners that a degree or other University qualification shall not be awarded, and where this recommendation does not include the opportunity for re-assessment, a student may appeal under the Academic Appeals procedures as defined in the chapter on Academic Appeals.

PM 6.2 MALPRACTICE IN UG AND PGT COURSEWORK

A student who has been excluded from the University, either permanently or for a stated time, or who has been adjudged by the Standing Academic Committee to have committed academic malpractice, shall have the right of appeal under the Academic Appeals procedures as defined in the chapter on Academic Appeals.

PM 7 MALPRACTICE IN RESEARCH DEGREE SUBMISSIONS

PM 7.1 APPLICABILITY

PM 7.1.1 For the degrees of:

(a) DSc, DLitt, PhD (including by published work), DClinPsy, DMgt, EngD, MPhil, MD; and

(b) for the degrees of MRes, and the degrees of MA, MSc, LLM, MMus if relating to a programme validated for such awards on the basis of research and titled ‘By Research’;

the definition of malpractice is as set out in section PM 1 above and includes: cheating in examinations (if applicable); plagiarism in the thesis or dissertation (including in published works if submitted for award of a PhD by published work); and fabrication of results.

PM 7.1.2 In addition, for the awards listed above, plagiarism shall be deemed to include unacknowledged or unattributed concepts, proposals, interpretations, methodologies or conclusions, which take place beyond the verbatim reproduction of texts or material without explicit identification or the source of the reference.

PM 7.2 SUBMISSION OF MATERIAL FOR EXAMINATION

PM 7.2.1 Candidates shall be required to submit, in addition to the hard copies of the thesis or dissertation, a copy of the text and related data or images, in a recognised electronic format: floppy disk, or CD-ROM in a recognised word-processing format only. Such electronic format, which must be submitted simultaneously with the hard copies, shall be retained securely by the relevant departmental officer, in the event that the examiners might need to refer to such electronic copy for the purposes of textual analysis or other scrutiny, including by the use of software. Such electronic copy shall be returned to the candidate, in acknowledgement of his/her copyright, when the award has been approved by the University.
PM 7.3  DEPARTMENTAL CODE OF PRACTICE

PM 7.3.1 Each department or equivalent shall prepare guidelines, relevant to the discipline involved, for publication to the candidate on first registration for the award, concerning the appropriate presentation of text and data in a thesis or dissertation.

PM 7.4  GUIDANCE TO EXAMINERS

PM 7.4.1 This regulation shall be issued to all examiners for the awards set out above. In the event that the examiners find evidence of a breach of the University regulations, involving plagiarism as defined above, the examiners shall not make an award but shall instead report on their findings to the Deputy Head of the Student Registry, in the first instance. Such a report shall set out the evidence that plagiarism has taken place and shall normally include a recommendation for outright failure with no opportunity for resubmission or re-examination.

PM 7.5  STANDING ACADEMIC COMMITTEE

PM 7.5.1 The report under PM 8.4.1 above shall be referred to the Standing Academic Committee, who shall set up a hearing, at which the candidate shall be invited to be present in person and to be accompanied by a friend (a member of the University). The Committee shall test the recommendation of the examiners and the evidence of plagiarism presented by them, and receive any other information submitted by the candidate and/or on his/her behalf at its absolute discretion. A written record shall be kept.

PM 7.5.2 In the event of the candidate being unable or unwilling to be present, and one deferment having taken place, the hearing shall take place in the absence of the candidate, who may however submit written information in explanation or mitigation of the allegation(s) presented.

PM 7.5.3 The Committee, having completed the above procedures, shall adopt one of the following conclusions:

(a) the accusation of plagiarism is unfounded, the candidate’s examination is void, and the candidate shall be examined as for the first time by a new panel of examiners, at a date to be determined; or

(b) the accusation is upheld, such that the candidate is deemed to have failed with one opportunity for revision and resubmission at a date to be determined, for re-examination for the award originally sought, by the same examination team; or

(c) the accusation is upheld, such that the candidate is deemed to have failed outright and shall be recommended for exclusion.

PM 7.5.4 A candidate who is deemed to have committed plagiarism, and the procedures above having been applied and conclusion (c) having been reached, shall have a right of appeal against exclusion under the Academic Appeals procedures as defined in the chapter on Academic Appeals.