

# Plagiarism Procedure for FE Students

## Introduction

EKC Group is committed to fair assessment procedures for all students and it is the purpose of this Procedure to define areas of academic misconduct and to establish procedures to be followed in suspected cases of cheating, academic misconduct or plagiarism.

Our Plagiarism Procedure is designed to help students in understanding what plagiarism is and how to avoid it in their work. EKC Group is committed to ensure it complies with the requirements of awarding bodies and is able to demonstrate that it has procedures in place to maintain the integrity of its assessment procedures

Academic misconduct threatens fair assessment, which in itself can then disadvantage all students and challenge the quality of the awards made. EKC Group is therefore committed to enabling students to avoid plagiarism through a programme of support and education at programme level aligned with EKC Group policy and procedures, and promoting both fairness and consistency of treatment.

In addition to educating for the avoidance of plagiarism, EKC Group is committed to detecting and acting when a case of plagiarism is suspected. The avoidance of plagiarism is part of education for effective academic writing and necessarily continues at all levels.

## What is plagiarism?

**Plagiarism** is the act of presenting the material, ideas, and arguments of another person/persons as one's own. To copy sentences, phrases or even particular striking expressions without acknowledgement, in a manner which may deceive the reader as to the source, is plagiarism; to paraphrase, in a manner which may deceive the reader, is likewise plagiarism. Plagiarism is identified in the composition of the work submitted by a student for assessment;

Plagiarism comes in differing forms:

- **Copying** - incorporating into an assessment, material from books, journals, the web, the work of another student or any other source, without acknowledgement and submitting it in verbatim or paraphrased form as one's own, is an act of plagiarism.
- **Collusion** - through the submission of work for assessment that purports to be the student's own work but is in fact jointly written with another student or other students, is an act of plagiarism.
- **Duplication** of material means the inclusion in coursework (including essays, projects, reports, dissertations and theses) of a significant amount of material that is identical or substantially similar to material which has already been submitted by the student for the same or any other programme or course at this University or elsewhere.

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Within an educational setting there are two main forms of plagiarism, these being:

- Copying of material from other sources such as Text books, Magazines, Journals, Internet, use of images from any other sources which is included in any work submitted for assessment and it has not been acknowledged about the source of information or the content of the material, this includes either referencing standards has not been fully or properly followed or not followed at all.
- Coursework presented by a student as it is their own work although it was created or worked out by another student or group of students but presented as if it was the work of the that person's individual work. In other words using the content of some other students work and presenting in way that it is their individual work.

### **Submissions**

- All appropriate work must be submitted through an appropriate format agreed by the academic area.
- It is the responsibility of tutors to identify the appropriate assessments and format required.
- Where submissions from students are submitted electronically a hard copy will be saved by the assessing tutor.

### **Academic Misconduct**

If a tutor suspects there has been any type of academic misconduct they should in the first instance verify the initial credibility of the alleged misconduct. All suspected cases of academic misconduct including internal cheating, collusion and Plagiarism are reported to the appropriate Head of Department;

The Department will investigate every allegation of academic misconduct in a fair and objective manner. Unless in exceptional circumstances, when this is not possible, the investigation will be completed by the Head of Department;

Students must be informed by the Head of Department of an allegation of cheating, academic misconduct or plagiarism by email and letter.

### **Investigations**

Investigators of academic misconduct must ensure:

- that the allegation is clear to the student
- that the student is offered the opportunity to make a statement
- that investigations comply with the relevant awarding body regulations

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## **Departmental Disciplinary Meeting**

Where possible, the timing of the investigation will ensure that tutors are available to observe the meeting.

If the Head of Department is satisfied that the allegation is credible, details are then given to the Deputy Principal/Assistant Principal.

The relevant Senior Manager (Chair) from the respective College may decide to:

- Consult with other staff
- Decide there is no case to answer
- Decide there is a case of minor misconduct (and if appropriate set a penalty)
- Decide there is a case of serious misconduct
- Request an investigation.

## **Minor Misconduct**

This can be due to student inexperience in the first year of a programme and the Chair may treat this as a formal warning. If this is a first offence for a second or third year of a programme, the Chair has discretion to treat the case as warranting a formal warning and a minor penalty. The Chair should be satisfied that the plagiarism is due to poor academic practice, there is no evidence to deceive and that this is the first incident.

Where the Chair determines that there is a minor offence the chair will write to the student and propose a penalty informing the student that it will be applied unless contested. Penalties will be determined by the board and could include zero marks for the work, resubmission of the work or a new assessment and any marks given to be capped at pass.

## **Serious Misconduct**

This is determined by the following:

- The contribution to the overall mark for a module made by the piece of work in which the instance of alleged plagiarism has been detected;
- The proportion of the piece of work that is plagiarised;
- Whether the student is in receipt of a formal warning;
- The number of previous or contemporaneous offences, if any, with any instances of repeat offending normally to be regarded as constituting a more serious offence;
- Evidence of intent to deceive, with any such evidence normally to be regarded as requiring the treatment of the case as per a more serious offence

Where the Chair determines that there is serious misconduct, a penalty is proposed that will be applied unless contested. The Chair will write to the student to inform them of the proposed penalty. In the case of serious misconduct, the student will be invited to attend a disciplinary meeting for clarification of the proposed penalty and to provide any additional evidence. When attending such a meeting the student can be accompanied by a member of staff, Student Union

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representative or a relative. These are not legal proceedings and a student may not be represented by a legal representative.

Penalties will be determined by the board and the penalty may range from a mark of zero for a single piece of work to termination of registration depending on the circumstances of the case.

### **Cheating in Examinations**

- Cheating in examinations by being in possession of unauthorised materials or electronic devices could be a penalised mark or zero mark depending whether first or subsequent offense;
- Cheating in examinations by using unauthorised materials or electronic devices could be a zero mark or termination of registration depending whether first or subsequent offense
- Cheating in examinations by communicating with another student could be a warning or zero mark depending whether first or subsequent offense;
- Cheating in examinations by copying from another student could be zero mark or termination of registration depending whether first or subsequent offense;
- Conspiring with others to copy work and permitting work to be copied by other students may results in zero mark, depending on the circumstances;

The above are examples and are not exhaustive and so do not limit the application of this Procedure.

### **Communication**

The student will be informed in writing of the disciplinary meeting decision within 3 working days of the meeting. A duplicate letter will be sent with the purpose of acknowledging the results of the disciplinary meeting and must be returned within 10 days.

### **Appeal**

The Department will make the student aware that they have the right to appeal to the respective College in the first instance and thereafter to their awarding body following the investigation and decision. Appeals to the College have to be made within 21 days of the disciplinary meeting. Students are required to put their appeal in writing and submit to the relevant College Principal. If the appeal is not upheld, students can then follow the appeals procedure of the relevant Awarding Body.

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