

SECTION A14

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

Introduction

- 14.1 As an academic community, Anglia Ruskin University recognises that the principles of truth, honesty and mutual respect are central to the pursuit of knowledge. Behaviour that undermines these principles weakens the community, both individually and collectively, and diminishes Anglia Ruskin's values. Anglia Ruskin is committed to ensuring that every student and member of staff is made aware of the responsibilities he/she bears in maintaining the highest standards of academic integrity and how those standards are protected.
- 14.2 This section of the Research Degrees Regulations describes Anglia Ruskin University's policy for managing an alleged assessment offence by students registered for an postgraduate research award conferred by Anglia Ruskin University, including all students registered at a UK or international Associate College. Students registered for (the taught) Part 1 of a Professional Doctorate programme are considered under Section 10 of the *Academic Regulations* (www.anglia.ac.uk/academicregs). All Associate Colleges are required to forward to the Academic Registrar any case of an alleged assessment offence for investigation by Anglia Ruskin University, as set out in these Regulations.
- 14.3 The Senate has approved procedures for dealing with an alleged assessment offence at postgraduate research level and these are conducted under the auspices of the Senate's RDSC which is formally responsible for the investigation of all such cases. Through the Academic Registrar (or nominee), the RDSC establishes a Panel to hear each case, where appropriate, chaired by a member of the RDSC.
- 14.4 The Academic Registry maintains a record of all assessment offences and penalties.
- 14.5 The principal method of communication with a student throughout the academic misconduct process is the student's Anglia Ruskin e-mail account. Written letters are sent as e-mail attachments. Communication is not conducted via postal services expect for the final outcome.

14.6 If the behaviour of a student becomes threatening or abusive during Stage 1 or Stage 2 of the process detailed below, then the Director of Research Students or Panel Chair respectively is empowered to suspend the process and refer the matter to the Secretary & Clerk under the disciplinary procedures contained within the *Rules, Regulations and Procedures for Students*. The process may resume at a later date, pending the outcome of the disciplinary process.

Definitions

14.7 For the purpose of these Research Degrees Regulations an “assessment offence” is the generic term used to define cases where a student(s) has sought to gain unfair academic advantage in the assessment process for him/herself or another student(s).

14.8 An assessment offence may be committed in relation to work undertaken for any assessment method used by Anglia Ruskin University and its Associate Colleges.

14.9 There are many forms of assessment offence including (this is not an exhaustive list):

- impersonating another student;
- submitting someone else’s work as one’s own (known as “plagiarism”: see below for a definition);
- falsifying data;
- the unauthorised and unattributed submission of an assessment item which has been produced by another student or person;
- the behaviour of one or more students which may result in the poor academic performance of another student or students;
- any attempt to bribe or provide inducements to members of Anglia Ruskin University staff, or to internal or external examiners in relation to the assessment process in its entirety;
- any attempt which, if enacted, is designed to undermine or breach the Research Degrees Regulations.

14.10 Plagiarism and collusion are common forms of assessment offence. They are defined as follows:

“Plagiarism”

Plagiarism is the submission of an item of assessment containing elements of work produced by another person(s) in such a way that it could be assumed to be the candidate's own work. Examples of plagiarism are:

- (a) the verbatim copying of another person's work without acknowledgement;
- (b) the close paraphrasing of another person's work by simply changing a few words or altering the order of presentation without acknowledgement;
- (c) the unacknowledged quotation of phrases from another person's work and/or the presentation of another person's idea(s) as one's own.

Copying or close paraphrasing with occasional acknowledgement of the source may also be deemed to be plagiarism if the absence of quotation marks implies the phraseology is the candidate's own.

Plagiarised work may belong to another candidate or be (purchased) from a published source such as a book, report, journal or material available on the internet.

“Collusion”

Collusion occurs when two or more individuals collaborate to produce a piece of work submitted (in whole or in part) for assessment and the work is presented as the work of one candidate alone.

Stage 1: Investigation and Making an Allegation

14.11 All candidates are expected to produce and submit a Turnitin report for their:

- (a) research proposal;
- (b) submissions for upgrade/confirmation of registration;
- (c) their thesis;
- (d) resubmitted thesis, where resubmission is required.

14.12 First Supervisors are required to confirm (on the form which is completed at the time of formal submission of work) that the Turnitin report has been discussed with the candidate and that any issues arising have been addressed.

- 14.13 Where a Supervisor, upgrade/confirmation of registration panel chair or Examiner is concerned that an assessment offence has been committed, the case is referred to the Faculty Director of Research Students. If the Faculty Director of Research Students believes that there is a case to answer he/she refers the matter to the Academic Registrar for further investigation.
- 14.14 On receipt of a suspected offence, the Academic Registrar nominates an Investigating Officer from amongst the RDSC membership, who is independent of the Faculty in which the candidate is registered.
- 14.15 The Investigating Officer is responsible for determining if there is sufficient evidence that an assessment offence has occurred and in so doing, determines the nature of the formal allegation to be put to the student (e.g.: plagiarism, collusion etc.). In reaching this conclusion, the Investigating Officer presents his/her findings to the Academic Registrar, within two weeks of being nominated to investigate the case.
- 14.16 If the Investigating Officer believes that no assessment offence of any nature has occurred, no formal allegation is made against the student and no further action is taken. If the Investigating Officer confirms that there is a case to answer, the allegation is put to the candidate by the Academic Registrar.
- 14.17 If a candidate denies the alleged assessment offence, the Academic Registrar convenes a Stage 2 Panel to hear the allegation and to give the candidate an opportunity to demonstrate that cheating has not occurred.
- 14.18 If a candidate admits to the allegation, the Academic Registrar applies the appropriate penalty in accordance with Regulations 14.25-14.28.

Stage 2: Panel Hearing

- 14.19 The Academic Registry is responsible for convening Stage 2 Panel Hearings. Membership of the Panel comprises:
- (a) two members of the RDSC who are not members of the Faculty in which the candidate is registered, and have not acted as the Investigating Officer (one of whom may act as chair);

- (b) a member of Anglia Ruskin University's Academic Regulations Subcommittee;
- (c) a postgraduate research student from another Faculty nominated by the president of the Students' Union, in consultation with the Executive Secretary;

The Academic Registry's Quality Assurance Service appoints an Executive Officer who minutes the Panel meeting and deliberations.

14.20 In addition, the following have the right to be in attendance:

- (a) the President of the Students' Union (or an elected representative of the Students' Union);
- (b) the presenter of the case (Dean of Faculty or nominee);
- (c) the student whose case is being heard and his/her friend or a representative of the Students' Union.

14.21 Neither Anglia Ruskin University nor the student whose case is being heard is legally represented during the conduct of a hearing.

14.22 The Hearing is formal and operates in accordance with the procedure set out in Section 10 of the *Academic Regulations*. The Hearing will take place as soon as possible and no later than two months after the student has responded to the formal allegation in Stage 1, requesting a referral to a Stage 2 Panel Hearing.

14.23 Exceptionally, in the event of the unavoidable absence of a Panel member (eg: due to illness), in order to reduce the inconvenience to the student, the Panel Hearing may proceed with three members provided that:

- One of the three members is a member of the RDSC or a member of staff approved to act as the chair of a hearing and;
- The student whose case the Panel has been convened to hear has no objections to proceeding with a three member Panel.

14.24 A report of the Panel Hearing is submitted to the RDSC for information and to implement the outcome of the process.

Penalties

- 14.25 Where an allegation of an assessment offence has been proved or admitted, the Academic Registrar, following consultation with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation) – as chair of the RDSC - recommends to the Vice-Chancellor that the student be expelled from Anglia Ruskin University. A student who is expelled under the Academic Misconduct process is not entitled to receive an intermediate award of any nature. For courses which attract academic credit, a transcript detailing the academic credit attained is issued.
- 14.26 If during the process the candidate provides evidence of extenuating circumstances that he/she asserts directly led to the assessment offence being committed, such information does NOT impact on the Investigating Officer's findings or the Panel's decision as to whether or not the assessment offence has occurred. However, if the Investigating Officer or the Panel believes that, as a result of the extenuating circumstances, the prescribed penalty is exceptionally inappropriate they can, at their discretion, refer the matter to the Academic Registrar for discussion with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation), to review the appropriateness of the penalty. The Investigating Officer and the Panel are not authorised to amend the penalty themselves.
- 14.27 The referral must be supported by relevant documentary evidence. The Academic Registrar and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation) consider the case within ten working days of receiving the request to review the penalty and are authorised to impose an alternative penalty.
- 14.28 All assessment offences are formally notified to the student at the conclusion of the process, in writing, by the Academic Registrar. Such notifications are sent within 20 working days of notification of the conclusion of the process by the Academic Registry.

Office of the Independent Adjudicator

- 14.29 If a student is not satisfied with the decision of the Panel Hearing, the student may make representation to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA). For these purposes, the final communication to the student under Regulation 14.28 above also serves as the 'Completion of Procedures Letter' required under OIA procedures.