

University Assessment Regulations 2021/22

The [2020/21 version](#) of the University Examination Regulations is also available to view.

For Taught Programmes

These assessment regulations should be read alongside the [Regulations and Code of Practice for Taught Programmes](#) (Section 11 specifically includes additional operational information in relation to the conduct of assessments). See also [guidance for staff to support the implementation of these regulations](#) (*University of Bristol access only*).

1. Nominees

1.1 Unless the context indicates otherwise, under these regulations a university officer or the chair of a Board of Examiners may act through their properly appointed nominee.

2. Conduct of assessments

2.1 These regulations apply to all students undertaking any format of assessment of the University of Bristol, irrespective of the location of the student and whether the unit and/or its assessment(s) is/are campus based or remote.

2.1 Engagement

2.1.1 Failure to engage with an assessment without reasonable cause may result in no marks being awarded for that assessment. It is the responsibility of the student to be aware of the details of their assessment timetable and to ensure they can engage at the appropriate time and by the appropriate deadline. Students who are unable to engage with an assessment should alert their school in a timely manner. Schools should advise students who are unable to engage with an assessment whether existing policies, such as extension requests, self-certification or extenuating circumstances are suitable for them.

2.2 Campus based (in person) examinations.

2.2.1 Entering the examination room: Students may not normally enter the examination room to sit an examination after it has been in progress for more than thirty minutes. Students who arrive late but within thirty minutes of the start of the examination will be allowed the remaining time, but no additional time, to carry out the assessment. Students who arrive more than thirty minutes late will not be permitted to sit the examination at that time. Exceptionally, candidates who arrive late may be permitted to sit the examination where the reason for the late arrival is directly due to a university- or city-wide major disruption that has affected several candidates, as determined by the Academic Registrar. In such cases, candidates may be given the full allotted time to sit the paper where practicable, otherwise they should complete what they can in the time available. An exam incident report will be submitted to the Board of Examiners to ensure the circumstance is considered. Students who are unable to start a campus-based, in person examination due to illness should use the self-certification process.

2.2.2 Leaving the examination room: No student may leave the examination room within thirty minutes of its start, save in exceptional circumstances, and with the permission of

the invigilator. To avoid disturbing others, students may not leave the examination room during the last fifteen minutes of scheduled time, save in exceptional circumstances, and with the permission of the invigilator.

2.2.3 Supervised absence: No student may leave and return to the examination room during an examination unless supervised by an invigilator while absent.

2.2.4 Communication during a campus examination: Unless an invigilator has given permission otherwise, during the examination a student will only communicate with an invigilator. Students may not behave in any way which is distracting to other students. A student who ignores a request from an invigilator not to behave disruptively may be required to leave the examination room. The student's examination scripts will be submitted to the Board of Examiners as they were at the time when the candidate was required to leave. The invigilator will annotate the scripts with the time at which the candidate left and submit a report to the chair of the Board of Examiners.

2.2.5 Permitted items and texts. A student may take to their desk only those items and texts that are permitted for the examination they are sitting. Guidance on permitted items in any exam is the responsibility of the school or department that owns the unit.

2.2.6 Examination Scripts: It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that all scripts are appropriately marked with an identifying name and number. No student may remove an examination script, or any other examination materials, from the examination room without permission.

2.2.7 Arrangements may exceptionally be approved for students to complete what would normally be a campus-based examination at a different venue away from the university's usual site. The process required for this is described in section 11 of the Regulations and Code of Practice for Taught Programmes.

2.3 Online Examinations

2.3.1 Starting online examinations: Online examinations will have a set start time and/or duration, which will be clearly communicated to students. Schools may provide a later starting time for students in a different time zone or exceptionally, where specific, individual circumstances necessitate it. Students will be told how they must access the examination, this may be via the electronic download of questions accessed via the university's Virtual Learning Environment (VLE), a specific website or portal, or via a specialised proctoring system. Students will be given full instructions on how to use the specified system. Students who do not comply with the instructions may have their answers disregarded.

2.3.2 Completing the online examination: The examination paper, or online delivery system will indicate the time available for completion. Clear instructions on how to finish and submit answers will be provided. It is the student's responsibility to submit their answers in the correct way within the time limit. Students who do not comply with the instructions may have their answers disregarded.

2.3.3 Problems during the online examination: If a student is unable to start an online examination, they should complete a self-certification form prior to the formal start time. If they start the examination but, due to issues that affect only them, are unable to complete the examination, they should inform their school and submit an extenuating circumstances form. Students will be provided with instructions on what they should do if the specified computer programme or software being used to deliver or proctor the assessment fails during the examination or submission process.

2.3.4 Communication during an online examination: Students should not communicate with others for the duration of an online examination. Candidates **must** work independently for online examinations. Sharing answers and working with others to complete the assessment is not permitted. Such behaviour will be viewed as collusion and dealt with as outlined in Section 5.

2.3.5 Permitted texts during an online examination: Students will be informed of what resources, if any, they are allowed to access during an online examination. Online examinations may be proctored (i.e. remotely invigilated) to support quality assurance and academic integrity of the examination. Students will be given full instructions and the opportunity to practice using the system when such proctoring is planned.

2.3.6 Examination answers: It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that all answers are formatted appropriately and marked with identifying information, as requested in the instructions, prior to submission.

2.4 Timed assessments

2.4.1 Starting the timed assessment: Timed assessments have a stated day and time from which students can access the paper, which will often be via the Unit's Virtual Learning Environment.

2.4.2 Completing the timed assessment: Timed assessments have a stated day and time by which answers should be submitted, as outlined in the instructions. It is the responsibility of the student to ensure their work is completed and submitted within the time allowed.

2.4.3 Problems during a timed assessment: If a student is unable to start a timed assessment or they start the assessment, but due to issues that affect only them, are unable to complete it, they should inform their school and submit an extenuating circumstances form. Students should be provided with instructions on what they should do if the specified computer programme or software being used to deliver the assessment fails during the assessment or submission process.

2.4.4 Communication during a timed assessment: Unless clearly stated as collaborative or groupwork, students **must** work independently for timed assessments. Sharing answers and/or working with others to complete the assessment is not allowed and such activity will result in the student being investigated for collusion, see Section 5. Schools must make clear to students where the timed assessment should be completed collaboratively and provide expectations for how students should work.

2.4.5 Permitted texts during a timed assessment: Students will be informed what resources are allowed to be accessed during a timed assessment.

2.4.6 Answers: It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that all answers are formatted appropriately and identifying information included, as requested in the assessment instructions.

2.5 Coursework Assessments

This section covers a wide variety of assessment formats. The school or department that owns the unit is responsible for providing clear instructions for coursework assessments. For programmes that use the university's formal assessment periods, the due dates for coursework assessments should fall outside of this period, and any variations to this should be agreed by the faculty's appropriate Education Director.

2.5.1 Starting the assessment: Coursework can be set at any time during the running of a unit.

2.5.2 Completing the assessment: Coursework will have a stated date and time by which they should be completed and submitted and schools must provide submission instructions. It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that all answers are formatted appropriately and marked with identifying information, as requested in the instructions, prior to submission. It is the responsibility of the student to ensure their work is completed and submitted within the time allowed.

2.5.3 Problems during coursework assessment: If a student is unable to complete their coursework assessment, they should consider requesting an extension and/or submit extenuating circumstances. university policy is that unauthorised late submissions are penalised by the loss of marks (see [section 17](#) of the Regulations and Code of Practice for Taught Programmes).

2.5.4 Communication during coursework assessment: Unless clearly stated as collaborative or groupwork, candidates **must** work independently on coursework assessments. Sharing answers and/or working with others to complete the assessment is not allowed. Schools must make clear to candidates where the coursework should be completed collaboratively and provide expectations for how candidates should work in such situations.

2.5.5 Answers: It is the responsibility of the candidate to ensure that their submission is formatted appropriately and marked with the required identifying information.

2.5.6 Any academic misconduct relating to the ethics of a student's research, including a project or dissertation, should be considered under the [Regulations on Research Misconduct](#). Misconduct is defined as not gaining ethical approval before undertaking research or making a significant deviation from the approved research without being granted ethical approval for the deviation.

3. Plagiarism

3.1 Definition of plagiarism

3.1.1 The unacknowledged inclusion in a student's work of material derived from the published or unpublished work of another source constitutes plagiarism whether it is intentional or unintentional. "Work" includes internet sources as well as printed material. Plagiarism is a form of academic misconduct but differences in academic practice and poor study skills can result in plagiarism occurring with minimal dishonesty. For this reason, cases of plagiarism are dealt with separately to other cases of academic misconduct. The only exception is where a student(s) directly plagiarises the work of another/others from within their same cohort. Such cases will be considered collusion, a serious form of cheating and all individuals involved will be dealt with via the process outlined in Section 5.

3.1.2 Examples of plagiarism (this list is not intended to be exhaustive) include:

- a. Quoting another's work "word for word" without placing the phrase(s), sentence(s) or paragraph(s) in quotation marks and providing a reference for the source.
- b. Taking a sentence or sentences from another source and re-using them after changing a small number of words. References to the original source may be given correctly.

- c. Using statistics, tables, figures, formulae, data, diagrams, questionnaires, images, musical notation, computer code, etc, created by others without acknowledging and referencing the original source.
- d. Summarising or paraphrasing the work or ideas of another without acknowledging and referencing the original source. "Paraphrasing" means re-stating another author's ideas, meaning or information in a student's own words. This includes all teaching material provided by staff. The need for full, accurate referencing may vary depending upon the assessment format and schools must make clear what the expectations are in this regard.
- e. Copying the work of a student from a previous cohort or another university, with or without that student's agreement. This includes any exemplar student assignments which may be provided.
- f. Collaborating with another student, even where the initial collaboration is legitimate, e.g., group or joint project work, and then presenting the resulting work as one's own. If students are unclear about the extent of collaboration that is permitted in groupwork they should consult the relevant unit director/leader or equivalent.
- g. Copying work, of any kind, from study notes that were generated by a study group of individuals and are used by said group for revision and reference. Ownership of such material is shared and hence should be summarised by paraphrasing and referenced.
- h. Re-use of academic work that has previously been used for credit at this, or another institution.

3.1.3 Schools should use appropriate software to aid their ability to detect potential cases of academic misconduct, including plagiarism and ensure students are aware of these methods. However, such software can only be an aid to detection and any suspected cases must undergo academic review before any action or penalty is applied.

3.2 Poor academic practice

3.2.1 Where minor irregularities (see guidance) are detected within a piece of work and academic review suggests that it is a case of poor academic practice rather than a deliberate attempt to deceive, appropriate other people's work or gain an unearned advantage, and where the student has not disregarded explicit instructions, the case should be referred to the unit or programme director.

3.2.2 If the unit or programme director agrees and feels that the poor academic practice may be addressed appropriately within the marking scheme (this does not mean the application of a set penalty), then the process outlined below in 3.2.3 should be followed.

3.2.3 In such cases explicit feedback should be given to the student, with further instruction, as necessary, on proper academic practice, and a note put on the student's record for future internal reference. Referral to [study skills support](#) is likely to be helpful for the student.

3.2.4 If the unit or programme director suspects that the irregularity may amount to more than poor academic practice they should consult with the designated member(s) of staff in the school who should record the incident and refer the matter to the appropriate Faculty Education Director so that procedure described in 3.3 can be followed.

3.3 Procedure for cases of plagiarism

3.3.1 All cases of plagiarism will be dealt with as detailed in these regulations, irrespective of the type of assessment in which it occurs. Cases where the similarity is to another student from the same cohort will be considered as cheating (i.e. collusion) and the process detailed in Section 5.0 should be followed.

3.3.2 All allegations of plagiarism raised by any route shall be considered initially by the relevant Faculty Education Director, or their nominated representative(s) for this purpose, responsible for the home school of the student (i.e. the school where the student is registered). All allegations should be supported by a clear indication of the elements of the student's work which are believed to have been plagiarised, by annotated copies of the sources which the student is alleged to have used, and a brief statement outlining the concern by the original marker or the unit director.

3.3.3 If multiple cases from one student are being considered as a single allegation, due to the time at which they have been discovered, and these cases cover units from more than one school or faculty then the relevant Faculty Education Directors should determine which school or faculty should handle the investigation.

3.3.4 The relevant Faculty Education Director, or their nominated representative, must make an initial determination of how the allegation of plagiarism will be dealt with within twenty-one days of the concern being raised.

3.3.5 Due to the potential for plagiarism to occur because of different academic practices, and/or poor understanding of our expectations, some cases can be dealt with through feedback to help students reach the required understanding of expected ways of working. This applies if it:

- is a first offence, and
- occurs in work set during a student's first teaching block of registration at the university on any programme, and
- does not involve suspected copying from another student from the same cohort.

In such cases the Faculty Education Director, or their nominated representative, will direct the Unit Director, or another appropriate academic, to discuss ways of working and expectations of academic integrity with the student. This process should be supportive and may involve directing the student to study skills support and resources and include additional staff from within the school, faculty or university. Advice and feedback on the academic content of the assessment should not be provided as part of this additional support so the student does not gain an unfair advantage over their peers. The student will be asked to redo the plagiarised section(s) of the assessment and resubmit their work within an agreed timetable. This will normally be within two weeks of the student receiving the additional support, providing this timescale does not conflict with other assessment tasks. The work will be marked with a full range of marks available and considered as a first submission. The case should be held on the student's internal record for reference in case further concerns over plagiarism are raised.

3.3.6 For **all other** suspected cases of plagiarism the Faculty Education Director, or their nominated representative, will either:

- a. convene a School Academic Misconduct Panel (SAMP) as per section 6.2,

- b. convene a Faculty Academic Misconduct Panel (FAMP), as per section 6.3, if the case is considered more serious.
- c. exceptionally and only due to the presence of mitigating factors, refer the case back to the school to provide more guidance and support, as per 3.3.5
- d. ask for more information, or summarily dismiss the case, if they judge that the allegation is not supported by sufficient evidence.

3.3.7 When determining which option to use in 3.3.6 the following factors should be considered:

- The educational history of the student and how this may have informed their understanding of academic integrity. Cases may be viewed as more serious where they involved students who have completed multiple terms at this university or another similar institution.
- Whether there have been previous offences and the student has already been given additional support and guidance
- The nature, extent and significance of the plagiarism in the piece of work.
- Whether the assessment contributes significantly to the student's progress or degree classification.

4. Re-use of academic work for credit

4.1 Academic credit should only be given for work once. Submitting, in whole or in part, work which has previously been submitted for assessment at the University of Bristol or elsewhere, without fully referencing the earlier work is a form of academic misconduct and hence not allowed. This includes unacknowledged reuse of the student's own submitted work. This may be referred to as 'self-plagiarism' by some.

4.2 Where students wish to refer to work for which they have previously received credit, they should either i) reproduce it directly as a quote or ii) rewrite, in a new form of words, the ideas contained in the original work. In both cases the original work should be referenced. This includes the students own previous work that has been awarded credit. It is important that schools explain to students that the re-use of their own work in this way will not gain the same mark as work which has a higher element of originality.

4.3 Where the re-use of academic work without appropriate referencing is detected, it is often due to poor understanding of why it is unacceptable. Providing it is a first offence of this nature, the student should be permitted to resubmit the assessment, as a first attempt and for a full range of marks. Support should be given by relevant academics within the school to help the student understand the issues associated with this practice and why it is unacceptable. If it is a subsequent offence, the matter should be dealt with as plagiarism and the process detailed in 3.3.6 followed.

4.4 In some cases students submit work for formative feedback which informs subsequent summative assessment. In this situation the formative assessment is not for credit and does not need to be referenced in the final summative assessment.

5. Cheating and other failures to comply with assessment regulations

5.1 Definition of cheating

5.1.1 A student engaging in any of the following will be considered to be cheating under these regulations:

- a. Accessing and/or making use of unauthorised items or texts during an examination (campus based or online). For campus-based exams this may occur either at their desk or during an authorised absence from the examination room.
- b. Planning, participating in or benefitting from collusion during any assessment (campus based or remote).
- c. Copying from another student(s) who has studied the unit at the same time.
- d. Dishonestly receiving help from another person(s), company or organisation during the examination or assessment
- e. Dishonestly giving help to another student during the examination or assessment
- f. Acting dishonestly in any way, whether before, during or after the assessment, to obtain an unfair advantage
- g. Acting dishonestly in any way, whether before, during or after the assessment, to assist another candidate to obtain an unfair advantage.
- h. Buying or commissioning an essay or other piece of work and presenting it as a student's own work (often called contract cheating).

5.1.2 A student who shares their work with others will be treated with equal seriousness to the student who copies the work. This applies even if it is not clear that the work was shared with knowledge that academic misconduct was planned.

5.1.3 Whilst plagiarism is a form of cheating for the purposes of these regulations it will be considered separately, as set out in Section 3 above.

5.2 Procedure for cases of cheating

5.2.1 Should a candidate be suspected of cheating during a campus-based examination, the invigilator will confiscate any unauthorised material, indicate on the student's script that it has been confiscated due to suspected cheating, and remove the script. The student will then be given further examination books and permitted to complete the examination. The invigilator will submit an incident report to the University Examinations Officer who will notify the chair of the School Board of Examiners from the student's home school. Cheating during an online exam, timed assessment or coursework will be investigated after the student has submitted their work.

5.2.2 Initial interviews with students may be necessary to help a school or faculty determine if cheating may have occurred. This may take the form of determining the level of understanding a student has on their submitted answer. The outcome of such interviews will be passed onto any subsequent academic misconduct panel to help inform their decision making.

5.2.3 All cases of suspected cheating, as defined in 5.1.1 (for plagiarism please see section 3), irrespective of the type of assessment in which it occurs, should be referred to the relevant Faculty Education Director, or their nominated representative, who will either:

- a. Refer the case to be dealt with as a [suspected contract cheating case](#).
- b. Convene a School Academic Misconduct Panel (SAMP), as per Section 6.2
- c. Convene a Faculty Academic Misconduct Panel (FAMP), as per Section 6.3

- d. Convene a University Academic Misconduct Panel (UAMP), as per Section 6.4, if the case is considered more serious.
- e. Ask for more information, or summarily dismiss the case, if they judge that the allegation is not supported by sufficient evidence.

5.2.4 When determining which option to use in 5.2.3 the following factors should be considered:

- Whether there have been previous academic misconduct offences
- The nature, extent, and significance of the academic misconduct
- Whether the assessment contributes significantly to the student's progress or degree classification.

6. Academic misconduct panels

6.1 General processes for academic misconduct panels

6.1.1 Academic misconduct panels may be held at school, faculty or university level, depending upon the seriousness of the case. Plagiarism will normally be considered by a school panel when it occurs for the first time, including if the student has previously been given additional support for an offence that occurred within their first teaching block of registration, as outlined in 3.3.5. All subsequent cases of plagiarism would normally be dealt with at faculty level, unless specific circumstances suggest a school panel would be more proportionate. Other forms of academic misconduct, such as contract cheating or collusion would normally be viewed as sufficiently serious to be dealt with at faculty or university level, however the option to refer to a school panel is exceptionally available if the case is thought to be more appropriate for this lower level of consideration.

6.1.2 Students may be asked to engage with an investigation in relation to academic misconduct via attendance at a panel and/or via completion of written questions as part of an investigation into a case. Panels will normally be held during term time but may also be held outside of this time to allow timely conclusion of a concern. Students may be asked to attend a panel in person or via video calling.

6.1.3 The student may elect not to attend an interview and to submit a statement to the panel instead. Where the student does not attend an interview, the panel will proceed to reach its conclusions without the student's attendance.

6.1.4 A note of the interview with the student(s) will be taken, which will be circulated after the interview to all parties. A member of staff may attend the panel in order to carry out this role.

6.1.5 The unit director or nominee of the unit affected or other appropriate academic linked to the work in question may be required to attend the academic misconduct panel as a witness (not as a panel member) in order to explain the allegation and provide specialist knowledge. The composition of the panel is outlined below under the relevant panel.

6.1.6 The student may be accompanied by another person at the panel interview. This person may address the panel and confer with the student during the meeting, however, they will not be permitted to answer any questions on behalf of the student, unless in exceptional circumstances where they are appropriately trained and the student is unable to do so themselves. The JustAsk service can provide advice and support to students during this process.

6.1.7 The purpose of the interview shall be to determine whether or not there has been academic misconduct and to allow the student to make representations and to present any mitigating factors.

6.1.8 Once the interview is complete, the academic misconduct panel may decide to defer a decision until further investigation has taken place. In such cases the panel should decide whether they need to meet with the student again to discuss any new material that has been considered as part of the decision-making process. Otherwise, the panel shall determine if misconduct has occurred. The applicable standard of proof will be the balance of probabilities. A student will be found guilty of academic misconduct if, on the evidence available, it is more likely than not that the offence was committed.

6.1.9 The penalty for an offence should be decided on the individual circumstances of the case.

6.1.10 The panel should ensure penalties reflect the seriousness with which the university views academic integrity.

6.1.11 Where there is a case to answer and the student is registered on a professional programme for which there is a Fitness to Practise (FtP) procedure, the concerns in relation to academic misconduct may also need to be considered under the FtP procedure. It may be appropriate to include a FtP Case Investigator as a member of the academic misconduct panel to allow the two processes to be completed within a single meeting with the student.

6.2 School Academic Misconduct Panels (SAMP)

6.2.1 School academic misconduct panels should be convened to investigate less serious cases of plagiarism only. Serious cases of plagiarism should be considered by a faculty level panel (see guidance for examples).

6.2.2 The Head of School is responsible for nominating a member or members of staff to discharge the responsibilities outlined in relation to SAMPs, including organising the panels, bringing penalties to the School Board of Examiners, and liaising with the Faculty Education Directors.

6.2.3 If the Faculty Education Director, or their nominated representative, decides to convene a SAMP, the designated member(s) of staff in the school (see 6.2.2) will notify the student in writing of the pieces of work affected and invite them to an interview.

6.2.4 The SAMP will consist of two academic members of staff nominated by the designated member of the school. If the school have a designated officer who deals with academic misconduct then this individual can be one of these two academic members on the panel. The panel should not include the student's personal tutor or research project/dissertation supervisor.

6.2.5 Where a panel requires advice on procedures and regulations, it should consult the Faculty Education Manager.

6.2.6 When considering a penalty, the SAMP should take into account the seriousness of the offence. Factors that should be considered include:

- a. The educational history of the student and how this may have informed their understanding of academic integrity.
- b. Whether this is a first or subsequent offence.

- c. The amount of credit attached to the assessment.
- d. The extent and significance of academic misconduct in the piece of work.
- e. The extent to which the academic misconduct undermines the learning objectives of the work.
- f. Whether the assessment contributes significantly to the student's progress or degree classification.
- g. The degree and effects of the dishonesty

6.2.7 The SAMP should make one of the following recommendations to the relevant Faculty Education Director or to the Board of Examiners:

- a. to dismiss the case entirely;
- b. to refer it back to the unit director to be dealt with as poor academic practice;
- c. to impose no penalty beyond recording the case on the student's record for future reference;
- d. to apply one of the following penalties:
 - i. to award the work submitted a lower mark than would otherwise have been awarded, down to the pass mark, or, award credit but a mark of zero.
 - ii. to require the submission of an equivalent piece of work which is awarded: the mark it would normally have achieved, a mark lower than it would normally have achieved but not below the pass mark, or credit with a mark of zero.

6.2.8 The SAMP should also consider whether referral of the student to skills support would be beneficial together with the most appropriate route for this to occur.

6.2.9 The SAMP may decide to refer the matter back to the relevant Faculty Education Director with a recommendation that the allegations be referred to a Faculty Academic Misconduct Panel (FAMP) if it considers that the offence merits a penalty which the SAMP does not have the power to impose. Alternatively, in exceptional cases, it can consider that the matter of such seriousness that it be considered by a University Academic Misconduct Panel (UAMP).

6.2.10 The school must write to the student informing them of the SAMP's decision and any recommendations within two weeks of the date of the panel.

6.3 Faculty Academic Misconduct Panels (FAMP)

6.3.1 If the relevant Faculty Education Director, or their nominated representative, decides to convene a FAMP, the Faculty Education Manager or nominee will notify the student in writing of the pieces of work/assessment(s) affected and the holding of an interview.

6.3.2 The FAMP will consist of at least three academic members of staff without previous direct involvement with the student as a personal tutor or research project/dissertation supervisor, including:

- a member of the student's home school;
- a faculty member who belongs to a school other than the student's.

6.3.3 The Faculty Education Manager or nominee will be in attendance to advise the panel on procedures and regulations.

6.3.4 When considering a penalty, the FAMP should take into account the seriousness of the offence. Factors that should be considered include:

- a. The educational history of the student and how this may have informed their understanding of academic integrity.
- b. Whether this is a first or subsequent offence.
- c. The amount of credit attached to the assessment.
- d. The extent and significance of the academic misconduct.
- e. The extent to which the academic misconduct undermines the learning objectives of the work.
- f. Whether the assessment contributes significantly to the student's progress or degree classification.
- g. The degree and effects of the dishonesty.

6.3.5 The FAMP shall determine whether or academic misconduct has occurred and make a recommendation to the Board of Examiners:

- a. to dismiss the case entirely;
- b. in cases of plagiarism, to refer it back to the unit director to be dealt with as poor academic practice;
- c. to impose no penalty beyond recording the case on the student's record for future reference;
- d. To apply one of the following penalties:
 - i. to award the work submitted a lower mark than would otherwise have been awarded, down to the pass mark, or, award credit but a mark of zero.
 - ii. to require the submission of an equivalent piece of work which is awarded: the mark it would normally have achieved, a mark lower than it would normally have achieved but not below the pass mark, or credit with a mark of zero.
 - iii. to award the student lower marks than those which they would otherwise have been awarded, or award no marks, for the unit of which the examination or piece of assessed work was part. The FAMP should determine whether an equivalent piece of work should also be submitted when recommending this penalty.

6.3.7 Where the panel considers that the penalties set out in section 6.3.4 may not be appropriate to the seriousness of the offence, then the panel may refer the case for consideration by a University Academic Misconduct Panel (UAMP) under section 6.4 below.

6.3.8 The faculty must write to the student informing them of the panel's decision and any recommendations within two weeks of the date of the panel.

6.4 University academic misconduct panels (UAMP)

6.4.1 The relevant Faculty Education Director, or their nominated representative, is responsible for deciding if the case is serious enough for consideration by a UAMP and they will contact an Associate Pro Vice Chancellor, who will convene the panel, with support from the relevant Faculty Education Manager, or their nominee.

6.4.2 The relevant Faculty Education Manager, or their nominee, will notify the student in writing of the assessment or piece(s) of work which are alleged to be affected and invite them to an interview.

6.4.3 The UAMP will comprise of at least three academic staff experienced in dealing with academic misconduct cases, including an Associate Pro Vice Chancellor, who will act as chair. The panel should have had no previous direct involvement with the student as a personal tutor or research project/dissertation supervisor, and should include:

- a member of the student's home school;
- a member of a faculty other than the student's.

6.4.4 A member of the University Secretary's Office will be in attendance to advise the panel on procedures and regulations.

6.4.5 When considering a penalty, the UAMP should consider the seriousness of the offence. Factors that also should be considered include:

- a. The educational history of the student and how this may have informed their understanding of academic integrity is a first or subsequent offence.
- b. The amount of credit attached to the assessment.
- c. The extent and significance of the academic misconduct
- d. The extent to which the academic misconduct undermines the learning objectives of the work.
- e. Whether the assessment contributes significantly to the student's progress or degree classification.
- f. The degree of dishonesty and the effects of the dishonesty.

6.4.6 The UAMP will determine whether academic misconduct has occurred and make a recommendation to the relevant FED, Board of Examiners or the Dean as appropriate:

- a. dismiss the case entirely;
- b. to impose no penalty beyond recording the case on the student's record for future reference. The panel should indicate if this record is for internal use only or for use in external references.
- c. To apply one of the following penalties:
 - i. To award the work submitted a lower mark than would otherwise have been awarded, down to the pass mark, or award credit but a mark of zero.
 - ii. To require the submission of an equivalent piece of work which is awarded: the mark it would normally have achieved, a mark lower than it would normally have achieved but not below the pass mark, or credit with a mark of zero.
 - iii. to award the student lower marks than those which they would otherwise have been awarded, or award no marks, for the unit of which the examination or piece of assessed work was part. The UAMP should determine whether an equivalent piece of work should be submitted when recommending this penalty.

- iv. to award the student a lower classification of degree than they would otherwise achieve based on their mark profile. The UAMP should determine whether an equivalent piece of work should be submitted when recommending this penalty.
- v. to require the student to withdraw from the university, which means that the student ceases to be a member of the university, and loses all rights and privileges of membership. This recommendation can only be made to the Dean of the student's home faculty.

6.4.7 The student will be informed of the decision and any recommendations in writing within two weeks of the date of the panel.

7. Consideration of recommendations from academic misconduct panels

7.1 When an academic misconduct panel makes an academic recommendation, it should be considered by the relevant school and/or Faculty Boards of Examiners and/or Dean (for UAMPs only). Due to the timing of assessment periods and Board of Examiner meetings it may be that dealing with cases of academic misconduct result in a student's progression or final award being delayed.

7.2 The ultimate decision on an academic penalty applied is taken by the Faculty Board of Examiners. However, as the academic misconduct panel made an informed decision based on available evidence, the normal expectation is that the recommendation would be accepted in full. Exceptions to this are where material available suggests the recommendation is disproportionate, or where new or exceptional mitigating circumstances pertaining to the assessment(s) considered by the academic misconduct panel are present.

7.3 Where an UAMP decides the case is of such seriousness that the withdrawal of the student from the programme is recommended to the Dean, the Faculty Board of Examiners will be informed of the outcome and consider whether any exit award can be made using credits awarded that had no academic integrity concerns.

7.4 The Boards of Examiners will explicitly consider the impact of the penalty on the student's credit points and, where applicable, degree classification and whether this impact, in the context of the student's overall performance, is proportionate to the offence.

7.5 Where a student is not permitted to resubmit the piece of work and the final mark for the assessment or the unit is less than that required to be awarded credit for a unit, then the student should be treated in the same way as if they had obtained the same mark through academic failure.

7.6 The student will have the usual right of appeal against a decision of the Board of Examiners and, in the case of expulsion, the decision of the Dean to accept the recommendation of the UAMP.

7.7 The decision of the Board of Examiners in relation to academic misconduct panels, with supporting rationale, will be recorded in its minutes.

For Research Programmes

8. Procedure for cases of plagiarism or cheating in a thesis submitted for a research degree

8.1 The [Regulations and Code of Practice for Research Degree Programmes](#), section 9 and Annex 8, describes how cases of plagiarism or cheating will be dealt with for research students.

9. Extenuating Circumstances

9.1 Procedure for consideration of extenuating circumstances in taught programmes

Boards of examiners shall establish a committee (which will meet before the Board of Examiners meets) to consider any relevant matters, for example personal matters such as illness or bereavement, that may have affected a student's performance in assessment.

9.2 Evidence

If a student wishes a board of examiners to take any such matters into account, he or she must complete and submit the relevant form **before** the meeting of the board at which the student's performance in assessment is to be considered. A written record must be kept of such matters. Any such matters which could have been raised before the meeting of the board, but, without good reason, were not raised, will not be considered in the event of an appeal.

The committee may require a student to submit such other evidence as it deems necessary to substantiate any matter raised by the student.

9.3 Extenuating circumstances in research degree programmes

The treatment of extenuating circumstances in research degree programmes is set out in the Regulations and Code of Practice for Research Degree Programmes.

10. Appeal against a decision of a Board of Examiners

10.1 Right to appeal

A student registered on a taught (undergraduate or postgraduate) programme may make an academic appeal against an appealable decision made by one of the following (referred to in this Regulation as a 'board of examiners':

- a. A faculty board of examiners (including a faculty progress committee or equivalent)
- b. A school board of examiners in relation to a penalty imposed for cheating or plagiarism.

A postgraduate research student may make an academic appeal against an appealable decision made by any of the following (also referred to in this Regulation as a "board of examiners"):

- a. The University Research Degrees Examination Board
- b. The Dean of the relevant faculty, on the recommendation of a registration review panel
- c. An upgrade or progression panel.

An academic appeal is a request for a review of a decision of an academic body charged with making decisions on student progress, assessment and awards.

An appealable decision is a decision in respect of:

- a. An examination or other form of assessment

- b. A student's progress, including a decision in respect of a suspension or a requirement to withdraw from the University
- c. In the case of a research postgraduate student, a decision by a Dean relating to termination or change of registration
- d. A penalty imposed for a cheating or plagiarism offence dealt with under these Regulations.

No student shall be treated less favourably as a result of bringing an academic appeal under this procedure.

10.2 Permissible grounds of appeal

Appeals may only be made on the basis of one or more of the following permissible grounds:

1. There has been a material irregularity in the decision making process sufficient to require that the decision can be reconsidered.

For example:

- a. the assessment and subsequent decision making process were not conducted in accordance with the relevant regulations;
- b. an adverse decision has been taken because of an administrative error;
- c. the student has not been given the opportunity to draw relevant matters to the attention of the board of examiners; and/or
- d. appropriate account was not taken of illness or other extenuating circumstances known to the board of examiners.

2. A student's performance in assessment has been affected by illness or other factors which the student was unable, for good reason, to divulge before the meeting of the board of examiners (see section 9 of these Regulations).

3. A penalty for cheating or plagiarism, imposed under the examination regulations by the school or faculty is wrong or disproportionate. For the avoidance of doubt, there is no right of appeal under these Regulations in respect of a penalty or penalties imposed under the Student Disciplinary Regulations and implemented by the board of examiners on the direction of the Vice-Chancellor or a Disciplinary Committee.

10.3 Grounds of appeal that are not permissible

1. Disagreement with the academic judgment of the board of examiners will not constitute a ground for appeal.

2. No appeal will be considered if it raises for the first time issues concerning the supervision or teaching of a student. Such matters will only be considered if they have been raised by the student promptly, at the time they first arose and pursued under the Student Complaints Procedure.

11.4 The Appeal Process

The appeal process has two stages:

- i The Local Stage
- ii The University Stage.

Those hearing the appeal at either stage will not attempt to re-examine the student, nor to appraise professional academic judgments, but will consider whether the decision made was fair and reasonable in all the circumstances of the case, and whether all relevant factors were taken into account.

Appeals should be resolved at the earliest possible stage and with minimum formality. The University Stage of the process may only be invoked if the student has pursued the appeal through the Local Stage and remains dissatisfied with the outcome.

10.5 The Appeal Form

In order to start the appeal process, the student must complete the Appeal Form and submit it to the Faculty Education Manager within 21 days of the notification of the appealable decision to the student after the meeting of the board of examiners. An extension of this time limit will be allowed, by the University Secretary, only in exceptional circumstances.

The Appeal Form must set out:

- a. the reason(s) for the student's dissatisfaction with the appealable decision;
- b. the student's grounds for appeal; and
- c. the outcome sought by the student.

All the evidence on which the student seeks to rely **must** be submitted with the Appeal Form unless there are good reasons why this is not possible.

The student is encouraged to seek assistance from the Students' Union Advisory Service ubu-justask@bristol.ac.uk when preparing the Appeal Form.

10.6 The Local Stage

On receipt of the completed Appeal Form and any accompanying evidence, the Faculty Undergraduate or Graduate Education Director (as appropriate) will review the appeal on behalf of the Dean of the Faculty (who may also act in person if he or she considers it appropriate) with a view to considering whether the appeal can be resolved at the Local Stage.

In the case of an appeal by a postgraduate research student, the Faculty Education Manager will forward the Appeal Form and any accompanying evidence to the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education) who will review the appeal at the Local Stage.

The Faculty Education Manager (or in the case of an appeal against a decision of the Research Degrees Examinations Board another appropriate person) will provide administrative support.

Appeals must be considered under all applicable permissible grounds, whether or not specified by the student in the Appeal Form.

If the person reviewing the appeal considers that the appeal can be resolved at the Local Stage, he or she may take such action to resolve the appeal as is fair and reasonable in all the circumstances of the case, including but not limited to any or all of the following:

- a. refer the student's extenuating circumstances to be reconsidered by a committee under section 9 of these Regulations, if the person reviewing the appeal considers that insufficient weight was given to the student's circumstances by the committee;

- b. allow the student to submit late evidence of extenuating circumstances, if the person reviewing the appeal considers that the student had good reason for his or her failure to submit the evidence at the appropriate time;
- c. refer the appealable decision for reconsideration by the board of examiners, with or without a recommendation as to the outcome of such reconsideration;
- d. where the person reviewing the appeal considers it appropriate, vary the appealable decision without referring it to the board of examiners and report the variation to the board of examiners.

If the person reviewing the appeal does not consider that the appeal can be resolved at the Local Stage the student may request that the appeal be progressed to the University Stage under section 10.7.

The Local Stage will normally be dealt with and the student informed, in writing, of the outcome of the review and the reasons for the decisions made, within 35 days of the Appeal Form being submitted to the Faculty Education Manager (or, in the case of an Appeal Form which has been submitted out of time, within 35 days from the date of notification, to the Faculty Education Manager, of the University Secretary's decision to allow an extension of time for submission of the appeal).

10.7 Progression to the University Stage

If the student remains dissatisfied with the outcome of the Local Stage or has not received the Local Stage decision by the prescribed time limit set out in section 10.6 above, they may request that the appeal is progressed to the University Stage. The student should make the request to the Student Complaints and Mediation Manager within 14 days of the Local Stage decision or, if earlier if specified, by completing the Appeal Progression Form and sending it to student-complaints@bristol.ac.uk. The original Appeal Form with supporting evidence, and the letter giving the Local Stage outcome should also be attached.

Upon receipt of the request to progress to the University Stage, the Student Complaints and Mediation Manager will obtain all the evidence considered at the Local Stage from the Faculty Education Manager. If the Student Complaints and Mediation Manager considers that further information from the student, school or faculty is required in order for the appeal to be considered, he or she may call for such information and this must be provided promptly.

The Student Complaints and Mediation Manager will invite the student to respond to the Local Stage decision. If substantive new information is provided by the student after the Local Stage decision has been made, the Student Complaints and Mediation Manager will normally refer this information back to the Local Stage for reconsideration before referring the appeal to the University Stage. Where appropriate, the Student Complaints and Mediation Manager may also intervene to suggest a resolution of the appeal before referring it to the University Stage.

Upon receipt of the Appeal Progression Form and other documentation from the Local Stage, the Student Complaints and Mediation Manager will refer the student's appeal to a Review Panel for consideration.

10.8 Appeal Review Panel

The Review Panel shall normally consist of three members of the academic staff who have had no prior involvement with the appealable decision or the Local Stage.

The proceedings of the Review Panel will not involve a hearing. The Review Panel may call for additional information from the student, school or faculty, which must be provided promptly. The Review Panel will consider the Appeal Form and other evidence and may:

- a. refer the matter back to the faculty (or in the case of postgraduate research students, to the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education)) for reconsideration with, or without, a recommendation for resolution. If following reconsideration at the Local Stage the original decision is not altered, the student may request that the matter be further reviewed by the Review Panel. If the original decision is altered, but the outcome is not acceptable to the student, the student may request that the new decision is referred to the Review Panel for further review, unless the new decision results in an outcome requested by the student in the Appeal Form, in which case there shall be no further right of appeal;
- b. dismiss the appeal, giving reasons, and issue a Completion of Procedures letter; or
- c. recommend that a committee be appointed by the Board of Trustees to hear the appeal.

The University Stage decision will normally be issued within 21 days of the date of the Review Panel. The student will be informed if it is not possible to respond within this time frame.

A decision by the Review Panel that the student has provided a good reason for failure to submit extenuating circumstances at the appropriate time shall be binding.

Recommendations by the Review Panel should normally be followed, unless based on inaccurate information or a manifest misunderstanding of the facts of the case. If after reconsideration at the Local Stage, a recommendation is not followed, evidence of the reconsideration must be provided and reasons given for the decision not to follow the Review Panel recommendation.

10.9 Committee of the Board of Trustees

If the Review Panel recommends that a committee be appointed to hear the appeal, the Board of Trustees will appoint a committee which shall normally consist of three members, including at least one academic member of the Board of Trustees or member of Senate, and which may include among its members University staff who are not members of the Board of Trustees. At the request of the student, the Board of Trustees may appoint a student sabbatical officer as an additional member. In the event of the Committee being divided in its view, the chair will have the casting vote. The Committee will normally be chaired by a lay member of the Board of Trustees. Wherever possible the Committee should include at least one member of the same gender as the student.

10.10 Clerk

The University Secretary will appoint a clerk to the Appeal Review Panel and to the Committee. The role of the clerk is to assist the Panel or Committee by collating the evidence, preparing the documentation, making arrangements for the hearing, taking a note of the proceedings and advising the Panel or Committee on the relevant regulations and procedures. The clerk may, on behalf of the Panel or Committee, ask for written witness statements or documents such as medical certificates to be produced. The student, the school and the faculty will be entitled to see all statements and documents seen by the Panel or Committee.

10.11 Nature of hearing

The Committee will decide its own procedure. The student may present his or her appeal in person or in writing as he or she chooses. Witnesses may be asked to give evidence.

10.12 Representation

The student may be accompanied at the appeal hearing by an adviser, friend or representative for support or representation. The Students' Union employs student advisers who may be asked to act in this capacity. In the event that the student fails to attend, without good reason, the hearing may be held in the student's absence. If the student has a good reason for not attending, the hearing will be rescheduled.

10.13 Time limits

The University will normally comply with the following time limits:

- a. the Local Stage will be completed within 35 days of receipt of the student's Appeal Form. Where the Local Stage has involved a meeting with the student, the Local Stage decision will be issued to the student within five working days of the meeting (these five days being included within the 35 day limit set out above);
- b. The Appeal Review Panel will meet within 35 days of the student's request for progression to the University Stage;
- c. The University Stage decision will normally be issued within 21 days of the date of the Review Panel.
- d. The Committee hearing will be arranged as soon as is practicable after the Review Panel's recommendation that a Committee be appointed. The Committee's report will normally be issued within 14 days of the hearing.

If the University is unable to meet these time limits it will inform the student of the reasons for the delay.

If at any time during the appeal procedure, the student fails to pursue the appeal or to respond to enquiries in a timely manner without good reason, the University Secretary may after a delay of more than 28 days on the part of the student, determine that no further action should be taken in respect of the appeal and that the appeal procedure is concluded.

10.14 Nominees

Unless the context indicates otherwise, under these Regulations an Officer of the University or other designated member of staff may act through his or her properly appointed nominee.

10.15 Report to Senate

The Committee will report to the Board of Trustees, setting out, in summary, the grounds of the appeal, the evidence received, the Committee's findings and any recommendations or instructions to be made by the Board of Trustees to the board of examiners. A copy of the report will be sent to the student and to the Faculty (via the Faculty Education Manager) or to the Chair of the Research Degrees Examination Board, as appropriate. The Student Complaints and Mediation Manager will present an annual report on appeals under these regulations to both Senate and the Board of Trustees and will inform the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education) of any general recommendations made by Committees of the Board of Trustees during the year.

10.16 Powers of the Board of Trustees

On receipt of the report of the Committee, the Board of Trustees may refer the matter back to the faculty (or the Research Degrees Examination Board, as appropriate) with a recommendation or instruction to the relevant board to amend its original decision.

10.17 Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA)

The OIA provides an independent scheme for the review of student complaints. The OIA will only consider cases when the University's internal procedures have been exhausted. It will not intervene in matters which turn purely on academic judgment.

At the end of the appeal process the student will be issued with a Completion of Procedures letter which will confirm the outcome of the appeal.

Following receipt of the Completion of Procedures letter the student is entitled to make an application to the [OIA](http://oiahe.org.uk) (oiahe.org.uk).

| Summary | | | |
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| The regulatory basis for the conduct of summative assessment, the procedure for cases of plagiarism or cheating and the procedure for students to appeal against a decision of a board of examiners are set out in these regulations. | | | |
| Scope - This document applies to: | | | |
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