

## Education for Health Promoting Best Academic Practice Policy

This policy applies to students who are:

- undertaking a module or programme accredited by The Open University,
- undertaking a Spirometry module accredited by the ARTP that started on or before 31<sup>st</sup> December 2018,
- undertaking an Allergy Professional Development module.

Students undertaking a module or programme accredited by The University of Hertfordshire (UH) should refer to the guidelines on the UH website ([www.herts.ac.uk](http://www.herts.ac.uk)).

### 1. Policy Statement

Academic honesty is fundamental to the values of Education for Health. We believe that no student should be able to obtain for him/herself and/or another student an unfair advantage by cheating and endorse the view that:

*'the goals of teaching, learning, and research can only be accomplished in environments in which ethical standards are upheld'*

(International Center for Academic Integrity, 2013, [p. 16]).

Assessment is the means by which we test whether a student has achieved the learning outcomes for a module and the standards for an award. It is therefore vital that each student is assessed fairly and on equal terms with other students. The consequences of cheating in any form will not be tolerated by Education for Health.

### 2. Definitions

#### a. Plagiarism

Plagiarism is said to have occurred when someone presents the work or ideas of others, whether published or not, as if this material were his or her own, without acknowledging the source.

This includes but is not limited to:

- copying word-for-word from a text, printed or electronic, without enclosing the words in quotation marks and acknowledging the source
- paraphrasing - that is, using different words to express the ideas of others - without acknowledging the source(s)
- summarising another person's work, including if a few words or the order of words has been changed, without acknowledging the source
- citing facts or statistics from another person or source without acknowledgment
- copying or downloading figures, photographs, pictures or diagrams without acknowledging the source(s)
- generating text by combining short extracts from other sources, perhaps changing or inserting a few words in the process, without proper acknowledgment

- copying, imitating or paraphrasing another student's work
- copying, paraphrasing or using information from module learning materials without acknowledgement
- purchasing or otherwise obtaining a submission, in whole or in part, from a third party, website or other source
- submitting work that is identical or similar, in whole or in part, to
  - work that the student has already submitted for assessment at Education for Health or elsewhere - **or**
  - work that the student has published.

As the above indicates, **students should not 'recycle' work - that is, resubmit the same or identical material** for assessment. This is because a key element of learning is the active application of knowledge and understanding, which does not happen when material is reused.

Note that this is different to the process of building upon earlier work in a subsequent assessment, such as the BSc Project.

- In this kind of situation, it is perfectly acceptable for a student to refer to their own earlier work, **as long as** it is properly referenced as with any other source.

On some occasions, student coursework consists in large part of quotations from other sources, with little or no discussion of the content of the quotations and why they have been included. This is not plagiarism as long as the quotations have been correctly referenced. However, this **is** a demonstration of weak academic practice, since it does not demonstrate that the student understands the material. There is guidance on how to effectively include evidence in coursework in the Academic and Writing Skills Guide, especially the sections on 'How to approach coursework' and 'Writing for Success.'

Please note that we strongly encourage students not to cite module learning materials in their coursework and instead to refer back to the original source of information. If this is not possible, students must ensure that they reference learning materials appropriately.

#### **b. Intent**

Intentional plagiarism, i.e. the deliberate submission of someone else's work as though it were one's own, is dishonest. However, plagiarism may occur unintentionally through poor academic practices, as students may for example submit work that contains the words or ideas of others without realising that they need proper acknowledgement.

Some specific examples of plagiarism that may be unintentional include:

- paraphrasing poorly:
  - changing a few words without changing the sentence structure of the original, or changing the sentence structure but not the words
  - using words from the original that are not part of one's vocabulary
- quoting poorly: putting quotation marks around part of a quotation but not around all of it, or putting quotation marks around a passage that is partly paraphrased and partly quoted
- citing poorly: omitting an occasional citation or citing inaccurately.

This policy refers to the actions of students rather than their intentions, and a piece of work that contains plagiarised material will be subject to a penalty irrespective of whether or not there was an

intention to plagiarise. Intent may however become relevant when we consider the outcome for a confirmed case of plagiarism. If a case shows evidence of a deliberate attempt to avoid detection, this is taken into account as part of determining a penalty as per the 'Plagiarism Reference Tariff' (Tennant and Rowell, 2010).

### **c. Collusion**

We require all work submitted for assessment to be a student's own independently prepared work, unless the assessment brief specifically gives other instructions.

Collusion occurs when two or more students collaborate to produce the same or similar work and then each present it as entirely their own. Collusion is an example of academic misconduct because, like other forms of plagiarism, it is an attempt to deceive by disguising the true authorship of an assignment or part of an assignment. Examples of collusion include:

- a student copying, or imitating in close detail, another student's work with their consent
- two or more students going through an assignment brief, collectively deciding how to answer the topic(s) and then using this information to separately write up their answer(s)
- two or more students dividing the elements of an assignment among themselves and copying or imitating in close detail one another's answers.

Where a student is found to have engaged in collusion, this will be treated as plagiarism and the same process and penalties indicated in this policy for plagiarism will apply. Students are expected to take reasonable steps to safeguard their work from improper use by others. In the event of a case of collusion being upheld, both students will be culpable. Suspected cases of collusion will be investigated irrespective of the submission timeframe.

Collusion should not be confused with peer discussion or group work in which students learn from one another, sharing ideas, as part of developing their knowledge and understanding, including as they consider how to independently undertake an assignment. Input from Education for Health staff or trainers is not considered collusion.

### **d. Other forms of academic misconduct including cheating and indiscipline in the examination**

The term cheating includes:

- Taking into the examination room, or possessing while in that room, any notes, books or other similar material, except those which have been supplied by the invigilator or are allowed by the rubric of the examination
- Copying from another candidate's script or work
- Communicating during the examination with another candidate
- Helping or trying to help another student, or getting or trying to get help from another student
- Consulting or trying to consult any books, notes or other similar material while temporarily outside the examination room during the period of the examination
- Having prior access to the examination questions unless permitted to do so by the rubric of the examination
- Substitution of examination materials
- Impersonation

- Having a mobile phone or other communication device at your desk or on your person during the examination
- Falsifying data
- Or any deliberate attempt to deceive.

Indiscipline in the examination is defined as any socially unacceptable action or behaviour that the invigilator believes has disrupted other students in the examination room, or has given a student an unfair advantage over other students. In cases of indiscipline, the invigilator may stop the examination and may ask any student involved to leave the examination room. Such students will not be permitted to re-enter the examination room and we may refuse to mark these students' examination papers.

Cases where cheating, indiscipline in the examination or any other form of academic misconduct is suspected will be handled according to the process described in Sections 5 and 6 of this policy. Where a student is found to have engaged in academic misconduct, a penalty will be applied from the same range of penalties as listed in the 'Plagiarism Reference Tariff' (Tennant and Rowell, 2010).

### **3. Background**

Maintaining academic integrity is important for students themselves, enabling them to engage fully in a genuine learning process that develops their level of knowledge and understanding. By engaging in academic misconduct such as plagiarism, students not only risk being detected and penalised but are missing opportunities to get reliable feedback on their work and progress thereby becoming more confident and competent learners. Ensuring academic integrity is also important for our credibility as an institution offering higher education, as plagiarism, collusion and other forms of academic misconduct have the potential to devalue the credit and qualifications that our students achieve.

We are therefore committed to promoting an ethos of academic integrity and ensuring that this ethos is consistently respected and upheld. We support students and provide them with information and guidance to prevent unintentional academic misconduct. Our commitment to academic integrity also means that we regard with severity any unfair means to enhance performance or influence the standard of award obtained.

It is important to us that we state clearly our responsibilities and those of our students in respect of best academic practice, as well as setting out the definitions that we will use in discussing matters relating to academic conduct. This policy also outlines the steps that will be taken in cases where academic misconduct is suspected and is supported by the accompanying document 'Procedure for investigating cases of poor academic practice and suspected plagiarism'. This policy focuses on plagiarism. It also addresses collusion and other forms of academic misconduct such as cheating and indiscipline in the examination. The process by which these are managed is described in Sections 5 and 6 of this policy for completeness.

### **4. Associated Procedures**

Section 9.9 Procedure for investigating cases of poor academic practice and suspected plagiarism

Section 9.10 Plagiarism Reference Tariff

## Section 9.16 Fitness to Practise Policy

Located on the Education for Health Policies and Procedures page:

<https://www.educationforhealth.org/education/student-support/regulations-policies/>

### 5. Roles and Responsibilities

As an organisation, we:

- support students by providing information and guidance on best academic practice, how to avoid plagiarism and its implications. This includes:
  - material on our website and Virtual Learning Environment (VLE), particularly the
    - Student Guide, which identifies the relevant policies and academic regulations regarding correct academic practice
    - Academic and Writing Skills Guide, which covers referencing, plagiarism and collusion in greater detail and has examples and exercises to support correct academic practice
    - Guide to 'Viewing the Similarity Report on Turnitin', which covers how to use the Similarity Report that is generated by TurnitinUK after an assignment is uploaded; students are encouraged to view the report before submitting work for marking
    - policies and procedures particularly this policy and the accompanying 'Procedure for investigating cases of poor academic practice and suspected plagiarism' and 'Plagiarism Reference Tariff'
  - our Student Support service, contact details for which are on our website and VLE
- support staff, trainers and markers in learning about and applying relevant policies, procedures and guidance
- have a process for handling cases of suspected academic misconduct that is designed to be fair, consistent and robust
- ensure that potential cases that are identified are followed up to ensure equity for all students.

Those involved in designing and delivering learning, including our staff, trainers and markers:

- use opportunities to support students in learning about correct academic practice
- set assessments that focus on applying theory and knowledge in clinical practice, since these reduce opportunities for students to submit material that is not their own as well as enhance learning
- provide feedback on student work as needed to support learning about correct academic practice
- follow Education for Health policy and procedures in identifying and managing potential cases of academic misconduct.

#### 5.1 Student Responsibilities

We expect our students to:

- familiarise themselves with guidance on best academic practice, including resources listed above
- take reasonable steps to protect their work from being used by others

- ask for help when needed, bearing in mind their submission date and ensuring they make provision for reasonable response times
- complete the required declaration with submission of their written assignment.

## 6. The Policy

The actions to be taken when academic misconduct is suspected are outlined in 'Procedure for investigating cases of poor academic practice and suspected plagiarism'. This procedure is intended to be fair, take into account the student voice, and be as timely as possible while enabling a robust and considered approach. In all cases students will be considered innocent until a case against them has been investigated and upheld.

Key points and indicative timescales are given below. For the purpose of this policy a day is defined as any calendar day (which includes weekends and public holidays). A working day is Monday-Friday excluding Bank Holidays and any other day on which Education for Health is closed, although this is infrequent. Letters are considered to be received within one day of the date posted.

### 6.1 Initial review by Academic Review Panel:

- When Academic Review Panel reviews a potential case, this review shall not involve any staff who have had prior involvement in the case.
- We aim to complete an initial review of a potential case at Academic Review Panel within 14 days from the date that we were first notified of the case.
- If Academic Review Panel determines that there may be a case to answer, a student will be notified of this in writing. The letter will advise students that a mark will not be able to be awarded for that element of assessment at this stage. The student will be asked for a response within 14 days.

### 6.2 Academic Review Panel further review of case with student response:

- Academic Review Panel will consider the student response as part of determining if academic misconduct has occurred. If no student response is received within the indicated timeframe, Academic Review Panel will proceed with its determination. After this meeting of the Academic Review Panel, no information submitted by the student will normally be considered.
- We aim to hold an Academic Review Panel meeting to determine the outcome of a case within 28 days of the previous meeting at which it was determined there may be a case to answer.
- If Academic Review Panel determines, after reviewing the case with the student response, that there is no case to answer, a student shall be notified of this outcome within 7 days.
- If Academic Review Panel recommends an outcome of poor academic practice in a student's coursework, this outcome will include advising the student that should a case of plagiarism be confirmed in the future, the penalty for that case would be determined as if the current case had **also** been a confirmed case of plagiarism, as per the 'Plagiarism Reference Tariff' (Tennant and Rowell, 2010).
- If Academic Review Panel recommends an outcome of academic misconduct, the outcome will include a penalty as per the 'Plagiarism Reference Tariff' (see section 6.4).

### 6.3 External Examiner review:

- If Academic Review Panel recommends an outcome of poor academic practice or academic misconduct, the case and recommended outcome will be forwarded to the External Examiners to review and respond within 14 days. We may forward cases to the External Examiners, and they may confer with each other, by email.
- Once the External Examiners' response is received, we will notify students in writing within 7 days either of the ratified outcome of the case, or that the External Examiners have not ratified the case and/or outcome and have referred the matter back to Academic Review Panel to review. If the case has been referred back to Academic Review Panel, the timescales indicated above shall apply.

#### 6.4 Penalties for confirmed cases of plagiarism

Penalties for confirmed cases of plagiarism are laid out in the 'Plagiarism Reference Tariff' which is available as section 9.10 on our website at: <https://www.educationforhealth.org/education/student-support/regulations-policies/>. The penalty depends on how much material has been plagiarised, whether plagiarism has occurred before (taking into account previous instances of poor academic practice as per above, if relevant), the level and so forth. In the Tariff, Level 1 equates to our FHEQ Level 5, and Level 2 to our FHEQ Level 6. The level in a case will be the level of module the student has undertaken.

As noted in the 'Procedure for investigating cases of poor academic practice and suspected plagiarism', in severe cases where plagiarism has been proven we reserve the right to:

- notify a sponsor providing funding for study
- flag a case (or cases) in any future academic reference
- notify an employer under our Fitness to Practise procedures. Further information about our Fitness to Practise policy is available as sections 9.16 and 9.17 at: <https://www.educationforhealth.org/education/student-support/regulations-policies/>.

#### 6.5 Appeal process

A student has the right to appeal against a decision in a confirmed case of plagiarism if they so wish, on the grounds that procedures have not been correctly followed.

Students should submit a written appeal explaining why they believe the decision is incorrect. In order to be considered, the appeal should be submitted within **28 days of receiving the letter confirming the outcome of the case**. The appeal should be submitted to Student Support at [studentsupport@educationforhealth.org](mailto:studentsupport@educationforhealth.org). On receipt of the appeal the Director of Education (or nominee) will review the decision including determining if there are clear grounds for an appeal. The Director of Education (or nominee) will respond to the appeal in writing within 28 days.

If the student's appeal is not successful, then right to further appeal falls under the Education for Health Appeals process. If a student wishes to pursue this route, they need to contact us within **28 days of receiving the letter confirming the outcome of the initial appeal**. Information about the Education for Health Appeals process and how to apply can be found at the 'Informal Queries and Appeals Policy', available as Section 12.1 at: <https://www.educationforhealth.org/education/student-support/regulations-policies/>

## **6.5 References**

International Center for Academic Integrity (2013) *The Fundamental Values of Academic Integrity* [Online], 2nd edn. Available at <https://academicintegrity.org/fundamental-values/> (Accessed 6 March 2019).

Tennant, P. and Rowell, G. (2010) *Plagiarism Reference Tariff* [Online]. nlearningLTD. Available at <http://www.plagiarism.org/paper/plagiarism-reference-tariff> (Accessed 6 March 2019).

## **7. Policy History**

Last updated: May 2019

## **8. Review Date**

May 2020