

Academic Integrity and Misconduct Policy

1. Introduction and Background

- 1.1. The University of Northampton is committed to fostering a culture of academic integrity among staff and students as a way to promote academic standards and to enhance the student experience. To fulfil this commitment, the University takes a 'holistic approach' to promoting academic integrity: one that addresses the complexities around academic misconduct and that inspires good academic practice (cf. QAA, 2006; Academic Integrity Service, 2010).
- 1.2. In seeking to foster this culture of academic integrity, the University reserves the right to use any software tools it considers appropriate in order to investigate cases of suspected academic misconduct. Such processing is in line with all agreements between the University and our students and it is also in the University's legitimate interests to investigate activities that are contrary to good academic conduct.

2. Purpose and Scope

- 2.1. The purpose of the Academic Integrity and Misconduct Policy is threefold:
 - To inform students of the expectations and processes around academic integrity at the University of Northampton.
 - To support all academic staff in promoting academic integrity among learners on taught and research programmes across the University.
 - To outline, for other relevant staff and stakeholders, the processes for promoting academic integrity across the University.
- 2.2. The Academic Integrity and Misconduct Policy establishes a minimum acceptable level of activity toward promoting learners' academic integrity and helps to ensure that students achieve [threshold academic standards](#).
- 2.3. Staff development opportunities and resources, such as *The Good Practice Handbook: Assessment, Feedback and Academic Integrity* are available to help staff explore particular relevant themes and practices and to share good practice with others.

3. Definitions

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- 3.1. Academic Integrity:** The [International Center for Academic Integrity \(ICAI\)](#) defines academic integrity as: ‘... a commitment to five fundamental values: honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility.’ It is from these values that an academic community can flourish ([Fishman, T. \(Ed\). \(1999\) *The Fundamental Values of Academic Integrity*, 2nd ed.](#)).
- 3.2. Academic Misconduct:** Academic misconduct is a broad term that includes plagiarism and variations thereof plus cheating and collusion (Perry, 2010). In this context, cheating includes contract-cheating/commissioning, deceptive behaviour, or any action by a student that facilitates another student in one of those activities. A full list of terms and their policy definitions is contained in the Glossary, Section 6.
- It should be noted that termination of studies is a possible outcome of this process.
- 3.3. Assignment Provider:** The term ‘assignment provider’ is sometimes used as a cover-all to refer all such providers of fraudulent assignments. See further Essay Bank, Essay Mill and Ghost-Writer.
- 3.4. Balance of Probabilities:** Decisions in cases of suspected academic misconduct are determined on the basis of whether the overall evidence supports the referral, or the student’s explanation i.e. which is more likely/more probable? The question to be determined is whether the work that has been submitted by the student is the result of their own honest endeavour (QAA [Contracting to Cheat in Higher Education: How to Address Essay Mills and Contract-cheating \(Third edition\)](#)). The decision will be based on all the evidence available, including that provided by the tutor, by the student and by any software approved for use at the University to help determine authorship of assessed submissions.
- 3.5. Cheating:** In this context, this refers to the obtaining, the attempt to obtain, or the provision of assistance to another to obtain credit for academic work by dishonesty or deception. It includes, but is not limited to, attempts to improve evaluation of performance. It may also include: lying, copying the work of a peer, discussion about a question or answer during a test or examination, accessing notes, ‘cheat sheets’ or other information devices prohibited by assignment, test or examination conditions.
- 3.6. Collusion:** [Sutherland-Smith](#) (2013) defines collusion as ‘inappropriate or unauthorised collaboration by two or more students in the production and submission of assessment tasks’. Dictionary definitions include (see Glossary for policy definition):
- ‘agreement between people to act together secretly or illegally in order to deceive or cheat someone’ ([Cambridge Dictionary](#));

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- 'secret or illegal co-operation, especially between countries or organizations' ([Collins Dictionary](#)).
- 3.7. Essay Bank:** An essay bank is any repository that provides pre-written (as against custom-written) assignments. See further Assignment Provider, Essay Mill and Ghost-Writer.
- 3.8. Essay Bot:** Any natural language processing (NLP) or artificial intelligence (AI) content generation software that assists/enables a student to submit assignments of a different standard than they can achieve by their own unaided endeavour.
- 3.9. Essay Mill:** An essay mill (or paper mill, assignment mill etc) is a business that employs, retains or acts an intermediary for ghost-writers, serves as a shop-front for ghost-writers. See further Assignment Provider, Essay Bank and Ghost-Writer.
- 3.10. Ethical requirements, ethical approval:** This refers to circumstances where there are ethical guidelines for working/studying in the subject area or specific ethical approval is needed before work/study can be carried out.
- 3.11. Extenuating Circumstances:** See Mitigating Circumstances.
- 3.12. Ghost-Writer:** A ghost-writer is any third-party who prepares all or part of an assignment for a student to submit it as their own work, in whole or in part, as an item of assessment. See further Assignment Provider, Essay Bank and Essay Mill.
- 3.13. Mitigating Circumstances:** These are circumstances that pertain to the timeframe for the preparation and submission of the referred assignment (for more information, refer to the [Mitigating Circumstances Policy](#)).

Appropriate independent documented evidence must be provided, along with an explanation of why the matter was not raised earlier under the Mitigating Circumstances Policy. If the same grounds were submitted in an application for Mitigating Circumstances then these will not normally be eligible for consideration under this policy. This does not affect the outcome of an academic misconduct process but can mitigate penalty.

- 3.14. Plagiarism:** [Park](#) (2004) defines plagiarism as involving '... unacceptable practices, particularly literary theft (stealing someone else's intellectual property and breach of copyright) and academic deception (in order to gain a higher grade).' Dictionary definitions describe plagiarism thus (see Glossary for policy definition):
- 'the process or practice of using another person's ideas or work and pretending that it is your own' ([Cambridge Dictionary](#))

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- 'the practice of using or copying someone else's idea or work and pretending that you thought of it or created it' ([Collins Dictionary](#)).

3.15. Vassalage: This refers to a situation where a student commits academic misconduct in whole or in part out of a sense of misplaced loyalty or commitment to another individual or organisation, misperceived familial or social or cultural or religious obligation to another individual or organisation etc. This refers to circumstances where there are demonstrable deep-seated patterns of behaviour and evidence of obligation, not simply 'They told me to...'. This does not affect the outcome of an academic misconduct process but can mitigate penalty.

4. Key Principles

McCabe and Pavela (2015) identify a set of principles for promoting academic integrity among students, which have been adapted as part of the framework for this policy.

- 4.1.** Academic integrity is recognised and affirmed as a core institutional value.
- 4.2.** Academic staff guide and mentor students' academic progress.
- 4.3.** Students understand the potential of the Internet—and how that potential can be lost if online resources are used for fraud, theft and deception.
- 4.4.** Students are encouraged to take responsibility for their academic integrity.
- 4.5.** Expectations around academic integrity are clearly communicated to students on a regular basis.
- 4.6.** There are opportunities to design assessment in fair and creative ways (i.e. to be 'more personal and more relevant', p. 14).
- 4.7.** Academic staff and the institution reduce opportunities to engage in academic misconduct.
- 4.8.** Academic staff and the institution respond to academic misconduct when it occurs.
- 4.9.** All stakeholders help to define and support campus-wide academic integrity standards.

5. Use of Editorial and Proof-Reading Services

- 5.1.** Students who wish to obtain additional support in writing appropriate academic English are advised in the first place to seek additional

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support from either:

- the [Learning Development team](#), who can assist with all matters associated with academic writing. In line with their stated policy, this team will use examples of student work in order to teach students how to improve the linguistic aspects of written assignments.
- the English language tutors who offer [English language tutorials and workshops](#), as well as an [online programme on NILE](#)¹.

- 5.2.** Neither the Learning Development Team, nor the English language tutors offer a proof-reading service, as this is not an effective learning and teaching strategy.
- 5.3.** Students who seek external support with proof-reading their work should recognise the potential risks associated with this activity, including the wrong use of technical terms or distortion of the original meaning of the student work. Under no circumstances should students allow proof-readers to directly edit their work: proof-readers should indicate where changes or corrections etc. need to be made but not make those changes or corrections.
- 5.4.** Any use of external editorial or proof-reading services must not compromise a student's authorship of the submission as the University requires all submitted work to be that student's own work. The act of submitting work is considered by the University as a statement that the work submitted is a student's own and, as such, the student will be held responsible for the work submitted. The use of third-party services (whether paid for or not) will not be accepted in mitigation of any deficiencies identified in the work.
- 5.5.** Students' using third-party proof-reading services, must include a statement to this effect on the submitted work.
- 5.6.** Students who use third-party services for proof-reading and/or related services e.g. editorial advice and submit the work in which those third-party services have made direct editorial/textual changes to the work, are liable to be referred for academic misconduct².

¹ The purpose of proof-reading is to ensure that the meaning is conveyed clearly and correctly in written English. Thus, proof-reading involves, for example, checking and correcting spelling, punctuation and grammar but not, for example, making editorial changes such as changes to structure or substantive content. It is not the responsibility of a proof-reader to check that the written English conveys the meaning intended by the writer: that would constitute editorial intervention.

² References to external and third-party support in sections 5.3-5.6 do not include supervisory support for the development of discipline-related writing skills as part of research degrees and taught-course dissertation/thesis and other principal modules. In addition, it is legitimate for a supervisor to correct substantive content, where expressed incorrectly, during the drafting stages of a dissertation or thesis. Students undertaking

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6. Key Responsibilities

- 6.1. Processes around academic integrity and academic misconduct must conform to the University Assessment Regulations for the appropriate academic year and must reflect the principles of academic integrity outlined in Section 4 of this document.
- 6.2. Students must be given explicit guidance with regard to the current University Academic Integrity and Misconduct Policy. This must be done at the programme- and module-level and must appear as part of the module information on the NILE sites within each programme. This guidance can be found on the [Academic Integrity](#) area of the ILT Website. Additional support from other online sources is also available (see Section 15).
- 6.3. If applicable, guidelines for professional standards (e.g. work placements), statements of ethical practice (e.g. dissertations) and/or professional codes of conduct (e.g. healthcare) in assessed work must be made explicit to students.
- 6.4. All students must be given guidance on academic misconduct prior to their first assignment in any module.
- 6.5. Each Faculty must appoint a minimum of six members of academic staff to serve as an Academic Integrity Officer (AIO) and at least one of these should have PGR experience and other specialisation in the investigation of contract-cheating and misuse of AI tools.
- 6.6. Each Faculty must ensure that the appointed AIOs are equipped to be highly effective in their roles by ensuring AIOs:
 - engage in an appropriate level of staff development;
 - receive an appropriate amount of time and other resource for the role; and
 - have opportunities to engage in continuing development opportunities around supporting academic integrity.
- 6.7. Suspected cases of academic misconduct must be treated according to the Suspected Academic Misconduct Procedures that follow. Where the student is undertaking a Postgraduate Research degree, the process detailed in Appendix 1 will apply instead.

7. Stage 1: Faculty-based Academic Integrity Officer (AIO) investigation

such types of writing are advised to discuss any proposed external third-party proof-reading or related support with their supervisors before proceeding.

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This is where a Marking tutor refers a suspected case of academic misconduct for investigation by an Academic Integrity Officer (AIO).

N.B. The following process is visualised in Appendix 3.

7.1. Initial Referral Process for all Misconduct (except Contract Cheating, Commissioning, Ghost Writing, Deceptive Behaviour or associated cases)

7.1.1. On identifying a case of suspected academic misconduct, the marking tutor should apply a ZZ grade to the item of assessment in NILE. No grade should be provided in any form to the student. The tutor should copy and paste the text in the box below into the relevant feedback area in NILE.

Standard text for including in NILE is as follows:

This assessment has been referred to an Academic Integrity Officer for further investigation on the basis of suspected academic misconduct. The marking of your work will be delayed until this process has been completed. You will receive an email shortly with further information about the nature of this referral and a link to information on what you need to do next. For more details, please see the Academic Integrity and Misconduct Policy.

7.1.2. The tutor completes the current [online Academic Misconduct Referral Form](#) and submits it to the relevant Student Records Team (SRT).

7.1.3. The referral should normally occur at the same time as the tutor releases the grades and feedback for the assignment to the rest of the cohort (i.e. in general, not later than 4 working weeks from the assignment due date). If submitted after this date, the AIO has the right to dismiss the case without further investigation.

7.1.4. The referring tutor must provide all relevant evidence to support the referral – including original sources for comparison purposes, where appropriate. The referral should also contain firm conclusions about the allegation and the manner by which these have been reached (e.g. viva voce, text matching report, observation, previous academic work or similar, metadata or other linguistic/stylistics analysis). The AIO decision will normally be based on the evidence provided by the referring tutor – there is no general expectation for AIOs to find the relevant evidence for themselves.

The tutor should also indicate whether there is sufficient academic input by the student for the assignment to be awarded a passing grade (bare pass) This does not require full marking of the submission but ensures that any penalty applied by the AIO is not

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higher than the paper would be worth academically, before the misconduct is taken into consideration.

- 7.1.5. In the case of suspected misconduct during an examination, the invigilator will complete the current examination 'Disturbance Form'. This form is then passed to the relevant Module Tutor who will then make a standard academic misconduct referral in line with this policy. The invigilator's report will form part of the evidence considered by the AIO in determining an outcome for the case.
- 7.1.6. Tutors should provide examples of work for all students involved in a suspected case of collusion.
- 7.1.7. Where it is suspected that the alleged misconduct involves another student registered at UON, either the initial referring tutor or the AIO may refer and investigate that other student under the provisions of this policy.
- 7.1.8. It is appropriate for concurrent referrals (i.e. those made within a few days of each other, but for different assessments) to be dealt with as one referral by the same AIO. In determining whether multiple referrals should be considered together, regard is to be had to whether the student has had opportunity to learn from earlier referrals i.e. whether an outcome in the previous case(s) has been received.
- 7.1.9. On receiving a referral, the Student Records Team will record all relevant details in the Academic Misconduct Log and pass the referral to an AIO within the same Faculty, in line with agreed Faculty processes for allocating cases.
- 7.1.10. Upon receipt of the referral and associated evidence, the AIO will review the evidence to see if there is sufficient evidence to support the allegation.
- 7.1.11. If there is insufficient evidence, the AIO can return the case to the tutor via Student Records and request additional evidence. If additional evidence is not received within 5 working days from when the case is returned to Student Records, the case can be dismissed due to lack of evidence.
- 7.1.12. Where the AIO considers that there is sufficient evidence available to support the allegation, they will provide details of the interview arrangements to the relevant Student Records team who will invite the student to attend the interview and ensure that the student has access to the evidence and understands the basis for the referral. The student will have an opportunity to discuss and respond to the evidence.

The student will be given advance notice (normally a minimum of five working days from date on email/letter) and will be notified of the right to bring a friend or relative for support (see Appendix 2).

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All communications will typically be by email, using the email address provided by the student to the University.

Responsibility for ensuring that the University has an accurate email address for the student, sits with the student.

If the student is unable to attend the interview they can provide a written submission in response to the referral and associated evidence. Normally, this interview will take place in person although it is accepted that this may not always be logistically possible (e.g. for students at partner institutions). In these cases, appropriate webinar technology may be used instead.

[Guidance for students in how to prepare for this interview is available online.](#)

7.2. The Stage 1 AIO Interview

- 7.2.1. The AIO may be accompanied by another member of staff at the interview with the student, if this is appropriate and if the student is advised accordingly.
- 7.2.2. Students are expected to bring all relevant evidence to support their authorship of the assessment in question with them to the interview.
- 7.2.3. In the event of non-attendance by the student, the AIO can make a decision on the evidence presented.
- 7.2.4. In determining the validity of the allegation, the AIO will exercise a judgment on the balance of probability (see definitions in Section 3). Extenuating circumstances will not be considered in determining culpability but may be considered in determining the level of penalty imposed.
- 7.2.5. Following the interview, the AIO will make a decision on the basis of all the evidence provided, included that provided by the student during the interview. The AIO can reach one of the following outcomes:
 - there is no validity to the allegation;
 - a minor offence has taken place and an assignment-level penalty will be applied by the AIO in accordance with the university tariff for minor cases; or
 - the case should be referred to Stage 2, because it is either a serious offence, or a second or subsequent minor offence where there is a record of previous academic misconduct, or the case has complicating factors; or
 - the case must be referred to Stage 2 because of suspected deceptive behaviour or practice (see section 13.3) possibly

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undetected by the referring tutor.

7.2.6. Once the AIO has reached a decision based on the evidence provided, they must contact Student Records to obtain details of any previous misconduct and associated penalties. This information should not be made available to the AIO before this point in the proceedings. There is an expectation that the penalty for second and subsequent findings of misconduct will increase, unless there is a clear reason not to do so.

7.2.7. Having made a decision, the AIO will pass the outcome to the Student Records Team, who will log the outcome, communicate with the student (via email) and place the paperwork (referral form and evidence) on the student's file. A copy of the outcome email should be sent to the referring tutor who will update NILE with the final grade awarded.

7.2.8. If the decision from the AIO is that there is no validity to the allegation, then the student work is returned to the referring tutor to be marked on the basis of the academic worth of the submission.

7.2.9. This stage of the process should normally be completed and the outcome letter sent to the student within 4 working weeks of the Academic Integrity Officer receiving the referral. Exceptions may include:

- complex and complicated cases which will take longer to investigate
- referrals made during university vacation periods due to the likelihood of key academic staff having annual leave

7.2 Students are permitted to appeal the AIO Stage 1 decision within specific criteria and timeframe, please refer to Section 3 Appeal Procedure, 9.1.

7.3. Initial Referral Process for Contract Cheating, Commissioning, Ghost-Writing, Misuse of AI Tools, Deceptive Behaviour and associated cases³

N.B. The following process is visualised in Appendix 4.

7.3.1. The University of Northampton recognises that there is a qualitative difference between forms of misconduct that can arise inadvertently/unintentionally and those which can only arise from deliberate acts by students. Therefore, the University has determined that all referrals for forms of misconduct in this latter category, i.e. deceptive behaviours/practices (see Misconduct Glossary), will automatically be considered by Stage 2 Academic

³ The terms 'contract cheating,' 'commissioning' or 'commissioned' will be used to refer to any cases of suspected contract cheating, commissioning, ghost-writing or the facilitation of any of these types of misconduct. More precise definitions can be found in the glossary (section 13).

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Misconduct Panels.

7.3.2. The University has identified a number of [AIOs in each Faculty with particular expertise in investigating contract cheating and commissioning cases](#) (hereafter referred to as CC-AIOs). The complexities involved in investigating these cases, and other complex cases, makes it appropriate for these CC-AIOs to support referring tutors in collating evidence to support a referral, including with the use of any additional, specialist software that the University has access to.

7.3.3. Indications that an assignment may have been subject to contract cheating or commissioning or misuse of AI 'writers' include, but are not limited to the following:

- Changes in writing style throughout the assignment;
- Inconsistent student 'voice' in comparison to previous work or other available evidence from the student;
- Document owned by someone other than the student (not conclusive in and of itself);
- Essay-mill/ghost-writer 'tell-tales' such as order reference/number in filename or on title-page, essay-mill name or writer ID number appearing as author, place-holders with comments such as 'put your name here', 'put essay title here', 'check that I have the correct hospital name' etc.;
- Resources listed but not cited or cited, but not listed;
- References to published work that are incorrect i.e. the published work does not actually say what the assignment attributes to it, or invented/faked;
- An anomalously low originality/similarity score (e.g. a score of zero, or close to, with bibliography excluded).

Staff Development for tutors and AIOs wishing to learn more about what these indications that an assignment has been written by someone other than the submitting student is available via C@N-DO.

7.3.4. On identifying a case of suspected contract-cheating or other deceptive practice, the marking tutor should apply a ZZ grade to the item of assessment in NILE. No grade information should be provided in any form to the student. The tutor should copy and paste the relevant text in section 7.1.1 (above) into the feedback area in NILE.

7.3.5. Before completing the [online referral form](#), the tutor should consult one of the identified CC-AIOs with expertise in contract cheating/commissioning and AI misuse cases. The tutor and the AIO should work together to discuss, collate and review any evidence to support a referral. This can include use of specialist software by a licensed CC-AIO to help identify whether a referral for

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contract cheating/commissioning or AI misuse is justified.

- 7.3.6. At an appropriate time, but before an official referral is made, the tutor can invite the student for a viva. The purpose of this viva is to gather evidence to help determine whether a full investigation potentially leading to a referral to an Academic Misconduct Panel under this policy is appropriate. This may include asking the student to comment on any indications emerging from a software analysis of the student's work.

This viva should take place synchronously i.e. face-to-face or via real-time technology where the student is visible to the tutor (e.g. webinar). Text chat vivas are not considered appropriate due to the potential for lag in responses, even if ostensibly presented as 'live chat'.

Guidance for students in how to prepare for this viva is available on the [Academic Integrity and Misconduct Factsheet](#).

- 7.3.7. This section details the process that must be followed when holding a section 7.4.6 viva:

- 7.4.7.1. The referring tutor⁴ will invite the student to attend a viva which must be held as soon as possible after the issue has been identified, ideally within the 4 working-week marking period.

- 7.4.7.2. The invitation to the student must contain the following information:

(a) the nature of the allegation, including the specific nature of the suspected misconduct; and

(b) guidance on how to prepare for the viva.

If this information is not provided, the student is entitled to request this information from the referring tutor.

- 7.4.7.3. The student must be given a minimum of 3 working days in which to prepare for the viva from when all aspects of sections 7.4.7.1 and 7.4.7.2 are met.

- 7.4.7.4. The viva will be undertaken by the referring tutor with the student present. The student is not normally entitled to bring anyone else along to the viva.

- 7.4.7.5. The student is expected to bring supporting evidence to the viva. This can include, but is not limited to: assignment drafts, research notes, work in progress from start to finish.

⁴ This process will be managed by the referring tutor and not by Student Records as until the tutor determines that there is a case to answer, no 'official' record will be created.

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7.4.7.6. The viva will review the student submission against the following pre-set criteria that will be circulated to the student as part of the invitation to attend the viva:

- a) Can the student provide a credible explanation for any apparent essay-mill/ghost-writer tell-tales present in their assignment?
- b) Can the student talk to the content?
- c) Can the student remember the essence of the argument?
- d) Can the student show how the argument develops?
- e) Can the student discuss the work and the resources cited?
- f) Can the student demonstrate that they authored the work? (e.g. by making requested changes - useful for computer coding or other practical assignments, or through production of draft work)

7.3.8. If the tutor and the CC-AIO determine that there are sufficient grounds for an academic misconduct referral on the basis of suspected contract cheating/commissioning etc, the evidence generated as part of the viva will become part of the evidence base to be submitted to Student Records for consideration by the AMP. The tutor remains responsible for completion of the referral form.

Relevant evidence to support the referral includes, but is not limited to:

- a) All relevant data obtained from specialist contract cheating/commissioning software. E.g. an appropriately edited version of the downloadable CSV file from Turnitin Authorship or equivalent from other software.
- b) In addition to (a), one or more screenshots of the relevant metadata which must clearly show the name(s) of the file(s) in question.
- c) Examples of other work by the same student (if relevant and available, to show their level of academic English or work that shows the 'known student voice')
- d) The Turnitin similarity/originality report where this shows evidence of third-party authorship e.g. where the similarity score is anomalously low and, as appropriate, with tutor annotations showing where the writing has been contrived to reduce similarity.

7.3.9. If there is no referral, the student submission is marked on the basis of academic worth only (i.e. marked on academic merits). The viva cannot be used to determine the mark awarded.

7.3.10. The referral form is processed by Student Records, who allocate it to the same CC-AIO as supported the referring tutor in the pre-referral phase. At this point, the CC-AIO undertakes a thorough investigation as appropriate, to support the referral and to gather additional evidence. If specialist contract-cheating software

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has not been used already, it should be used at this point.

- 7.3.11. Once the investigation has been completed, the case is passed to the Student Conduct, Complaints and Appeals Team to convene a Stage 2 Panel hearing.

8. Stage 2: Academic Misconduct Panel (AMP) to adjudicate a case that has been escalated by the AIO due to the nature of the suspected offence

- 8.1. All cases referred to Stage 2 will be triaged by the Student Conduct, Complaints and Appeals Team to ensure the referral warrants a Stage 2 hearing and is supported by sufficient evidence.
- 8.2. Cases that are not considered to warrant a Stage 2 hearing (i.e. where the evidence is insufficient for imposition of a module level penalty or termination of studies) or where penalties are still available at assignment (as opposed to module) level, will be returned to the original AIO to determine an outcome in line with Stage 1 or to provide further evidence to warrant a Stage 2 hearing.
- 8.3. Cases that are heard by an Academic Misconduct Panel, will comprise:
 - (a) an experienced AIO as Chair;
 - (b) at least two other AIOs who have had no previous involvement with the cases examined and are not involved with the student's programme of study;
 - (c) an Officer appointed by the Academic Registrar
- 8.4. In all cases, the Officer to the Panel or the Panel Chair reserve(s) the right to call or contact the Stage 1 AIO (or nominee) to the Stage 2 Panel hearing to present the case and any associated evidence or provide any necessary clarification.
- 8.5. In all cases, the student will be invited to attend the panel hearing. The student will be given advance notice, at least 5 working days and will be provided with the documentation that the panel will consider. Students are entitled to bring a friend or relative for support, however, they are not allowed to present or advocate on behalf of the student. Legal representation is not normally permitted (see further Appendix 2).

If the student cannot attend the hearing then they are entitled to make a written submission outlining their position. The Panel is entitled to consider the case and come to a decision in a student's absence.
- 8.6. After hearing the case and considering all the evidence, the panel will decide that:

- there is no validity to the allegation; or

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- a minor offence has taken place and a penalty will be applied in accordance with the university tariff for minor cases; or
 - serious academic misconduct has occurred.
- 8.7. Where serious academic misconduct has occurred, the panel must determine the penalty in accordance with the university tariff for serious offences. The panel may, at this stage, take account of any previous offences. In line with section 7.2.6, there is an expectation that the penalty applied will be an increase on any previous penalties, unless there is a clear reason for this not to be the case.
- 8.8. It is expected that findings of contract-cheating or commissioning or unauthorised use of AI tools will normally result in the application of a module level penalty or termination of study. Lesser penalties should only be applied in exceptional circumstances, and only in consultation with the Academic Integrity Lead.
- 8.9. In determining the validity of the allegation, the panel will exercise a judgment on the balance of probability. Extenuating circumstances will not be considered in determining culpability but may be considered in determining the penalty imposed.
- 8.10. If the panel determines that programme termination should be applied, it must make a suitable recommendation for consideration by the Academic Registrar (or nominee).
- 8.11. The Officer (or nominee) will advise the student of the panel's decision in writing within ten working days. This email should also be forwarded to the relevant Student Records Team and referring tutor who is required to update NILE with the final grade outcome.
- 8.12. Students are permitted to appeal the Stage 2 AMP decision within specific criteria and timeframe, please refer to Section 3 Appeals Procedure.

9. Stage 3 Appeals Procedure

9.1 Stage 3a: Appealing a Stage-1 AIO decision

- 9.1.1 Students are permitted to appeal the AIO decision from a Stage 1 Interview. Appeals will only be considered if they are made using the [Academic Misconduct Appeal Form](#) and submitted to the Student Conduct, Complaints and Appeals Team via email to scca@northampton.ac.uk within five working days of the AIO outcome.
- 9.1.2 There are only 2 possible grounds for appeal:
- (a) the decision arrived at by the AIO is wrong in fact (i.e. academic misconduct has not occurred); or

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- (b) the requirements of the Academic Integrity and Misconduct Policy have not been followed.

In both cases, students choosing to appeal the AIO decision must provide evidence to support the appeal. This evidence must be provided at the same time as the appeal is submitted. Appellants will not be permitted to introduce new evidence during any appeal hearing.

- 9.1.3 Appeals will be considered by the Student Conduct, Complaints and Appeals Team to determine if the appeal criteria have been met. Appeals can be rejected if they do not meet either of the grounds listed in section 9.1.2. In these cases, the University will clearly indicate the basis for the refusal of the appeal. The student will be provided with a Completion of Procedures email.
- 9.1.4 If a student has an outstanding resit opportunity, this should be taken regardless of any decision to appeal the AIO decision. The consequences of not completing the resit should be made clear to the student. Students are normally entitled to 4 working weeks between receiving an academic misconduct outcome from the AIO (including a referral to Panel) and the submission date for the resit assessment to allow sufficient time to complete the assessment and obtain academic skills support. Provision of feedback and standard resit dates for other members of the student cohort are unaffected by this clause.

Where a formal warning has been given, students are normally entitled to 4 working weeks between receiving the grade for the marked work and the submission date for the resit assessment to allow sufficient time to complete the assessment and obtain academic skills support.
- 9.1.5 Appeals against an AIO decision will be reviewed by a panel of AIOs. In reviewing the Stage 1 AIO's decision, the AIO Panel has the authority to increase or decrease the penalty.
- 9.1.6 The Stage 3a AIO Panel will comprise 2 AIOs, one of whom will be the nominated chair. If necessary, a third AIO can be asked to participate. This will typically be in cases where the first 2 AIOs cannot reach an agreement.
- 9.1.7 The panel will normally meet virtually, with the ability to hold a face-to-face hearing if required. Students will not normally have the right to attend these hearings.
- 9.1.8 The expectation is that these cases will be determined within 10 working days of the panel receiving the documentation from the Student Conduct, Complaints and Appeals Team.
- 9.1.9 The appeal panel's decision marks the end of the University's process in relation to Academic Misconduct and there is no further internal appeal against the decision of the Academic Misconduct Appeal Panel.

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9.1.10 The student will be notified of the outcome within 10 working days. The written outcome will include a 'Completion of Procedure' letter (sent via email), which details the appellant's right to apply for a review to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education.

9.2 **Stage 3b: Appealing a Stage-2 Academic Misconduct Panel decision.**

9.2.1 Students are permitted to appeal the AMP decision from a Stage 2 Hearing. Appeals will only be considered if they are made using the [Academic Misconduct Appeal Form](#) and fit the appeal grounds as specified in item 7.4.2. Appeals must be submitted to the Student Conduct, Complaints and Appeals Team via email to scca@northampton.ac.uk within five working days of the AMP outcome notification.

9.2.2 If the AMP hearing is held because of a direct referral by an AIO (i.e. the AIO considers that a serious offence has occurred, the case has complicating factors, or the referral was for contract cheating, commissioning, deceptive behaviour or associated cases) then an appeal against an outcome may be made to the Student Conduct, Complaints and Appeals Team via email to scca@northampton.ac.uk within five working days of the AMP outcome notification.

9.2.3 Students choosing to appeal the AIO decision must provide evidence to support the appeal. This evidence must be provided at the same time as the appeal is submitted. Appellants will not be permitted to introduce new evidence during any appeal review or hearing.

9.2.4 The Academic Registrar (or nominee) will determine whether the appeal presents credible grounds for the case to be reviewed based on the criteria in section 9.1.2.

9.2.5 If, in the opinion of the Academic Registrar (or nominee) the appeal has no merit, then the outcome will be confirmed as in section 9.2.8 and 9.2.9 (below).

9.2.6 Where an appeal includes credible evidence which the Academic Registrar determines should be reconsidered, the case will be returned for consideration by the next AMP hearing and section 8.3 - 8.10 of the Stage 2 process (above) will be repeated.

9.2.7 Where an AMP is reviewing a decision made by a previous panel, the second panel has the authority to increase or decrease the penalty previously imposed.

9.2.8 The appeal panel's decision marks the end of the University's process in relation to Academic Misconduct and there is no further internal appeal against the decision of the Academic Misconduct Appeal Panel.

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9.2.9 The student will be notified of the outcome within 10 working days. The written outcome will include a 'Completion of Procedure' letter (sent via email), which details the appellant's right to apply for a review to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education.

10 Tariff

10.1 Table 1 shows the possible penalties for Academic Misconduct and by whom these penalties can be applied. Any of these penalties can be applied as this is not a cumulative scale; however there is an expectation that the penalty will increase in severity for subsequent acts of misconduct. Ultimately, the decision as to the severity of the penalty is the responsibility of the University to determine.

Table 1: Tariff for Academic Misconduct

	Penalties	Decision Maker
Penalty at assignment level:	Formal warning (early stage students only) ⁵	AIO
	Grade for assignment reduced to bare pass	AIO
	Grade for assignment reduced to fail (AG).	AIO
Penalty at module level:	Final written warning ⁶	AMP
	Grade for assignment reduced to fail (AG). Resit rights removed.	AMP
	Grade for module reduced to AG.	AMP
	Grade for module reduced to AG ⁷ repeat module grade capped at bare pass	AMP
	Grade for module reduced to AG ⁷ . Right to repeat module withdrawn.	AMP

⁵ The formal warning penalty is intended only for exceptional use in cases of a first referral for a student at an early point in their first year of study where there is evidence of very minor academic misconduct (i.e. as could be regarded as 'poor scholarship'). It should not be used for deceptive behaviour/practice or where the misconduct materially compromises the learning outcomes. The formal warning should not be used in other circumstances: an AIO seeking to use a formal warning in other circumstances should first seek guidance from the Academic Integrity Lead.

⁶ See further, sections 10.4 to 10.5.

⁷ AG stands for a G grade awarded on the basis of academic misconduct.

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	Grade for module reduced to AG ⁷ . Right to repeat equivalent credits withdrawn.	AMP
	Termination of studies	AMP

10.2 When determining the appropriate penalty for the misconduct, the following factors should be taken into account:

- extent and seriousness of the misconduct
- stage of student study (e.g. term 1, year 1 as compared to final year dissertation)
- is it poor academic practice or intentional misconduct?
- a student's previous history of misconduct
- is it a concurrent referral with no time for the student to have benefited from developmental opportunities
- the credit rating of the work

This is not a definitive list. The precise penalty will be determined based on all the circumstances of the case.

10.3 However, in the light of sections 7.2.6 and 8.9, second and subsequent penalties will normally increase in severity unless there is a clear and justifiable reason for this not to be the case.

10.4 The Final Written Warning (section 10.5) should be included in any Outcome letter to any of the penalties awarded by the AMP in line with the tariff (Table 1). This includes:

Cases where a student has had multiple previous findings of academic misconduct and has had time to engage with additional support e.g. from Learning Development, but where there is no evidence of improvement to their academic practice.

Cases where a student has been referred for ghost-writing or otherwise facilitating academic misconduct but has not actually submitted any work for summative credit. In these cases, the warning will be given in isolation from any other penalty.

All cases where a student is found to have engaged in contract-cheating/commissioning, or other deceptive behaviour, irrespective of penalty.

10.5 The final written warning will state that 'Any further findings of academic misconduct, for any reason, are liable to result in termination of studies.'

10.6 Penalty Tariff for Unethical Conduct

Penalties for unethical conduct will vary depending on the nature of the breach. There are three possible options:

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- **Failure to obtain ethical approval:** Student fails the assignment and is awarded an AG grade¹ (right to resit retained). Where there are significant consequences of any such failure, a case can be referred to Panel.
- **Falsification of ethical approval/adherence to ethical requirements:** This aligns with the definitions of falsification or fabrication of data and is considered an intentional act to deceive the University. The case will be referred to Panel to reflect the seriousness of the act.
- **Breaches of agreed ethics:** AIO reviews case and awards a penalty for stage 1 hearings, including possible referral to Panel, depending on the nature of the breach.
- It should be noted that legal action cannot be discounted. See section 13.4.

11 Records

- 11.1 A copy of the records of all academic misconduct cases will be placed on the relevant student file. Where a case is dismissed, all documentation will be removed and shredded.
- 11.2 The University will hold an electronic record of all allegations of academic misconduct. These data will inform the review processes.

12 Academic Misconduct and Assessment Boards

- 12.1 Except for noting the outcomes of this policy and procedure, Assessment Boards shall take no account of allegations of academic misconduct. The Boards will apply any penalty determined through this procedure. The Boards have no authority to vary the penalty⁸.
- 12.2 Where the penalty allows resubmission or reassessment, the work required will to be determined by the Board in the usual way.
- 12.3 Assessment Boards will be notified of every case where a decision on an academic misconduct allegation is pending and will not confirm an outcome for the relevant assessment until the decision is known. The element of assessment will be clearly identified and a 'deferred decision' will be recorded.

13. Misconduct Glossary

13.1. General

⁸ It should be noted that this requirement does **not** over-ride Academic regulation 3.7.8. In other words, a student whose assessment grade is adjusted as a result of an academic integrity process will still be entitled to be awarded the higher grade for that assessment component where this is relevant.

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The University regards academic misconduct as comprising two categories: that which can arise inadvertently and that which can only occur as the result of deliberate acts.

Please note: Additional definitions, alternative descriptors and examples of each of the following can be accessed through a standard online search.

13.2. Possibly inadvertent behaviour

This section refers to forms of academic misconduct that can occur coincidentally or inadvertently, and which do not necessarily arise from deliberate acts.

Plagiarism. In the context of the University's AIM policy, plagiarism essentially refers to the presentation of another person's ideas or work as one's own, without acknowledging and appropriately referencing the true source(s).

- In the wider academic misconduct context, in line with dictionary definitions, plagiarism is sometimes used as a cover-all term for any type of academic misconduct where a student submits work that they claim/imply as being their own original work when it is not.

Collusion. In the context of the University's AIM policy, collusion essentially refers to the working with one or more other students to submit work that you have done in common as your individual work for assessment, thereby committing plagiarism. All students involved are culpable. This can include a student sharing a previous submission to enable another student to submit it as their own, in whole or in part, as an item of assessment.

- It should be noted that collusion can occur in assignment submission, face-to-face and online contexts. Also, see the definition of 'facilitation' below.

Duplication, replication, self-plagiarism. These refer to the same thing: this is where the same material is submitted more than once for the purposes of obtaining academic credit. Unless this is explicitly allowed for a given assignment, e.g. stated in the course or module specification or assignment brief, reuse of assessment content from previously submitted items of assessment is considered academic misconduct because academic credit for the work has already been received. In addition, any previously submitted work that is reused incorrectly or inappropriately is unlikely to fully address the assignment brief, and it is the student's responsibility to confirm the appropriateness of any intended reuse before proceeding.

- Reuse of previously submitted material is customarily, but not always, acceptable:
 - for assignment referrals/resubmissions, e.g. to correct material from first submissions,
 - in dissertations, e.g. from proposals and intermediate assessments into the final submitted dissertation.

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- With regard to the reuse of previously submitted content for assignments on repeat modules, students are advised to:
 - check assignment briefs carefully and be alert to any changes in assignment specification from when they previously took the module,
 - check with assignment tutors if advice in course/module specification or assignment brief is missing or unclear.

13.3. Deceptive behaviour or practice

This section refers to forms of academic misconduct that cannot occur coincidentally or inadvertently, and which can only arise from deliberate acts. Irrespective of any intention on the part of a student, the effect of such acts is to deceive the University's grading and assessment processes and outcomes.

- The expectation is that, owing to the seriousness, all deceptive behaviour/practice cases are referred to AMP by the investigating AIO, so that an AMP can impose penalty. Only in exceptional cases, and only after consultation with the Academic Integrity Lead, should an AIO not refer a deceptive behaviour/practice case to AMP.

Academic theft. This is where a student steals the work of another student and submits it as their own work as an item of assessment. This is different to collusion (see above) because there is no consent of any form, actual or implied, by the student whose work is stolen.

Academic outsourcing. This is unauthorised and/or undeclared human or technological assistance to produce academic work, in whole or part, for academic credit, progression or award, whether or not payment or other favour is involved. It includes, but is not limited to, contract cheating, commissioning, the purchase of pre-written assignments from online repositories ('essay-banks'), inclusion of content provided via self-styled tutorial services, inclusion of content obtained by unauthorised and/or undeclared use of AI-enabled software such as AI text generators ('writers') and paraphrasing tools.

- Contract-cheating and commissioning refer to the same thing, also sometimes referred to as false authorship. This is where a student commissions their academic assessment from an assignment provider (see above) and receives back the finished work in order to submit it as their own work, in whole or in part, as an item of assessment.
 - Contract-cheating is sometimes used to describe circumstances when there is payment or other reward involved.
 - Commissioning is sometimes used to describe circumstances when there is no (obvious) payment or other reward involved.
 - False authorship is sometime used to describe where a student is not the author of their submission, in whole or in part.
 - However, the payment, or offer or otherwise of any reward is immaterial, as is any claim that the work was provided via online or other essentially self-styled tutorial etc. service. The academic misconduct is the act of

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submitting work for assessment that has been prepared in whole or in part by a third-party or an unauthorised technology tool.

Deceptive behaviour/practice. This covers a range of behaviours where a student modifies all or part of the content of an item of assessment in order to obfuscate, deceive or impede the University's assessment processes (including, e.g. plagiarism detection, academic integrity checks, word counts etc.), whether those processes are carried out by tutors or other staff, software or other tools. This includes, but is not restricted to, four significant sub-categories of covert content, (sometimes termed 'text manipulation'):

- Inclusion of images (e.g. screenshots) of sections of text in place of the original text, such that it appears as normal text to human readers but is 'seen' as embedded graphical objects by plagiarism detection or word count software, for example, and therefore ignored.
- Inclusion of 'invisible' (e.g. white text, background-colour text) characters so that the text appears normal to human readers and is not picked up by plagiarism detection or word count software such that similarities are not reported or words not included in the overall word count. For example, replacing spaces between words with hidden characters such that software 'sees' unrecognised pseudo-words instead of the underlying real words, or disguising copied text such that software 'sees' it as quoted material when, in fact, it is plagiarised.
- Inclusion of look-alike characters from other alphabet fonts, e.g. from Cyrillic into Latin, such that the text appears normal to human readers but which plagiarism detection software 'sees' as unrecognised pseudo-words and is thereby deceived into not reporting similarities.
- Use of a font or other aspect of document formatting such that the underlying nature, content etc. of the assignment are disguised from tutors and/or software (e.g. plagiarism detection, word count, authorship identification).

Examination misconduct. This is where a student contravenes the regulations in a formal examination or equivalent item of assessment. This includes, but is not restricted to, use of any device or software designed to deceive invigilators, use of any device or software in a proscribed manner, concealment of proscribed materials or objects by any means for use during the examination.

- This also includes any attempt to deceive any software or process used by the University for the purpose of carrying out remote or online examinations, whether written or viva-voce or other format. This includes, but is not restricted to, having a third-party who is physically present at the remote location but off-camera, or who is present virtually/online, who contributes to the assessment (or AIM viva-voce) by any means unless explicitly stated as permissible for that assessment.

Fabrication, falsification. These refer to the same thing: this is where data, information, graphic objects (e.g. diagrams, maps, photographs) or citations, or

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artworks/objects of any sort, in any part of an academic exercise, typically an assessment, are 'made up' or invented.

Facilitation. This is defined as one student taking any action to enable or assist another student to commit academic misconduct. This can include, for example, communicating with an assignment provider on behalf of another student or acting as an influencer, agent or intermediary for an assignment provider.

- It is a very serious form of collusion (the facilitator is colluding with the student whose activities they are facilitating) and can be undertaken as a favour and doesn't necessarily have to involve payment or other reward.

Ghost-writing. This is defined as a student undertaking any assessment activity on behalf of another student. This typically includes writing all or part of an assignment but, for example, can also cover collection and analysis of data, production of artworks/photographs/objects, practical or placement activities. It also includes a student selling or otherwise providing previously assessed coursework to another student. Ghost-writing can be undertaken as a favour and doesn't necessarily have to involve payment or other reward.

Impersonation, personation. These refer to the same thing: this is where a third-party (possibly another student), for example, sits an examination or attends a face-to-face assessment (viva-voce) or interview in place of a student. This can occur whether that activity involves the student's physical or virtual/online presence or participation.

- The academic misconduct includes both aspects, i.e. includes both a student who impersonates another student, and a student who requests and/or allows a third-party to impersonate them.
- It is a form of contract-cheating/commissioning (the impersonator is contracted/commissioned by the student whose identity they assume in order to deceive) and can be undertaken as a favour and doesn't necessarily have to involve payment or other reward.

13.4. Unethical Conduct

This is defined as the act of failing to comply with any or all of the ethical requirements when undertaking undergraduate and Level 7 research activity including those of relevant professional and/or accrediting bodies. It includes failure to obtain ethical approval as well as breaching agreed ethical requirements whether originating from within the University or applicable in any placement activity with external organisations undertaken as part of a programme of study.

The misconduct includes, but is not limited to, behaviours that actively breach the policy and procedures, and breaches by omission, such as:

- Proceeding without obtaining ethical approval where:

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- approval was indicated for the item of assessment, or for the module or programme of study within which an item of assessment is set;
- tutorial/supervisory advice indicates it is necessary; or
- the literature around an item of assessment indicates it is necessary.
- Falsifying ethical approval, or falsely claiming to have obtained ethical approval.
- Breaching agreed ethical approval or requirements.
- Breaching published/available/accessible ethics codes of practice as applicable to a programme of study as a whole or an item of assessment.

It should be noted that University internal policies and procedures do not prevent the possibility of external action being taken for serious ethical breaches, as per relevant legal, professional, regulatory or context-specific duties.

Penalties will vary depending on the nature of the breach. See section 10.6 for details.

14. Links to related UON Policies, Guidance and Regulations

[Assessment & Feedback Portal](#)

[Academic Integrity Web Area](#)

[University of Northampton Skills Hub](#)

[UNPAC 2017 \(University of Northampton Plagiarism Avoidance Course 2017\)](#)
– a student self-study module

[Academic Misconduct Referral Form](#)

[Academic Misconduct Appeal Form](#)

[Guidance to students on how to prepare for an academic misconduct interview, appeal or viva](#)

15. Links and references to related external documents

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Perry, B. (2010). Exploring academic misconduct: Some insights into student behaviour. *Active Learning in Higher Education*. 11(2), 97-108.

QAA (2006). Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education, Section 6: Assessment of students. Gloucester: QAA.

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Eaton, S. E. (Ed.) (2023) *Handbook of Academic Integrity*, second edition. Springer. Forthcoming...

Eaton, S. E., Curtis, G. J., Stoesz, B. M., Clare, J., Rundle, K., Seeland, J. (Eds.) (2022) *Contract Cheating in Higher Education: Global Perspectives on Theory, Practice, and Policy*. Palgrave Macmillan, Springer. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-12680-2>

Academic Integrity and Misconduct Policy

Appendix 1

Academic Misconduct Process for Postgraduate Research Students

1. Guidance on referring suspected cases of academic misconduct

In relation to a postgraduate research student undertaking a PhD or MPhil, or Professional Research thesis, suspected academic misconduct may be referred:

- i) by the supervisory team;
 - When a student's skills in relation to academic integrity do not develop appropriately, and/or the student does not take appropriate action to remedy previous instances of academic misconduct,
 - When misconduct is suspected in a piece of work or a report specifically requested by a supervisor or sponsor,
 - When misconduct is suspected in the documents submitted for assessment at the registration or transfer stages;
- ii) by the Research Degrees Board when misconduct is suspected in the documents submitted for assessment at the registration or transfer stages; or
- iii) by examiners when examining the thesis submitted for examination.

2. Suspected Academic Misconduct Procedure – Stage 1

2.1 Upon suspecting academic misconduct in relation to a postgraduate research student undertaking a PhD or MPhil, or Professional Research thesis:

- i) a **supervisor** must provide clear, written feedback to the student explaining why the matter has been referred and informing the student that an email will be sent to them in due course outlining what will happen next. The supervisor refers the matter to the appropriate Academic Integrity Officer (AIO) by completing the Academic Misconduct Referral Form and submitting it to the Graduate School. The Graduate School will log the referral and pass it to the AIO;
- ii) a **Research Degrees Board (RDB) member** must first consult the RDB chair who may consult other members and/or the supervisory team in order to decide whether to refer the case. In the case of a referral, the Chair or a nominated member shall provide clear, written feedback to the student explaining why the matter has been referred and informing them that an email will be sent to them in due course outlining what will happen next. The RDB Chair or nominee refers the matter to the appropriate Academic Integrity Officer (AIO) by completing the Academic Misconduct Referral Form and submitting it to the Graduate School. The Graduate School will log the referral and pass it to the AIO;

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- iii) an **examiner** must provide clear, written feedback to the Graduate School explaining why the matter should be referred to an Academic Integrity Officer (AIO). The Graduate School must inform the student of the referral and the reasons for it in an email, also outlining what will happen next. The examiner refers the matter to the appropriate Academic Integrity Officer (AIO) by completing the Academic Misconduct Referral Form and submitting it to the Graduate School. The Graduate School will make the other examiner(s) aware of the referral and the examination process may not continue until the outcome of the referral is known. The Graduate School will log the referral and pass it to the AIO.

2.2 Suspected academic misconduct in relation to facilitated Level 8 modules shall follow the same procedure as for taught modules.

2.3 Where, in the Academic Misconduct Procedure in the main policy document, it refers to the Student Records team, for Postgraduate Research Students the Graduate School shall act as the Student Records team. For facilitated Level 8 modules, the Graduate School shall communicate with the Student Records team responsible for assessment administration.

2.4 If, at Stage 2 of the Procedure, the panel determines that programme termination should be applied, it is the Research Degrees Committee to which it should make a recommendation rather than the Academic Registrar as stated in section 5.7.35.

3. Tariff

In addition to Table 2 in the Procedure, the following table shows the possible penalties for Academic Misconduct in relation to a postgraduate research student undertaking a PhD or MPhil or Professional Research thesis and by whom these penalties can be applied.

	Penalties	Decision maker
Postgraduate research – prior to thesis submission	Allowed to continue/progress and require remedy of misconduct as part of supervisory process	AIO
	If at APG or transfer, remedy misconduct before registration or transfer application can be submitted to the RDB	AMP
	Termination of studies	AMP
Postgraduate research – post-thesis submission	Hold viva and include remedy of misconduct as part of post-viva amendments	AMP
	Remedy misconduct before proceeding to viva	AMP
	Hold viva and refer thesis including remedy of misconduct	AMP
	Refer thesis without viva. Remedied thesis to go to viva as resubmission (i.e. no further attempt allowed)	AMP
	Termination of studies	AMP

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Appendix 2 Guidance on accompanying 'friend'

The University of Northampton recognises that providing support and advice to persons as part of this Policy should extend to enabling them to be accompanied at any formal meeting or hearing.

Legal Representation

Because the proceedings of appeal and complaint hearings are part of University's internal arrangements, formal legal representation is not normally either helpful or appropriate: legal representation is therefore likely to be the exception, rather than the norm. A complainant or appellant who intends to be accompanied at a meeting or hearing by a legal representative, or another person acting in a professional capacity, must contact the University to request this at least 5 working days prior to the hearing and set out the reasons for making this request. Any such request will be considered by the Academic Registrar (or nominee) and a decision made. The decision, and reasons for it, will be relayed to the student. Where a legal representative is to be present the University may consider whether to include its own legal representation. In such circumstances it may become necessary to postpone the meeting to a later date.

Role of the 'Friend'

The University normally restricts the role of friend to that of support and advice. The friend will not normally be allowed to present the student's case on their behalf, nor respond directly to questions. At the discretion of the investigator or the Chair of the Hearing, the friend may present a brief supporting statement. Where a student wishes their friend to take a more active role this should be requested to the Chair of the Hearing in advance (with reasons). The Chair will decide whether or not to accept the request.

The appellant or complainant has the right to confer with their friend during the course of the hearing or meeting, for example, before responding to any question from the panel or the investigator.

The appellant or complainant may not be represented in their absence by a third party: in such cases the panel will normally consider the case in their absence. Where, through reasons of disability, the appellant or complainant is unable to represent themselves, appropriate adjustments will be made and these arrangements will be subject to approval by the Academic Registrar.

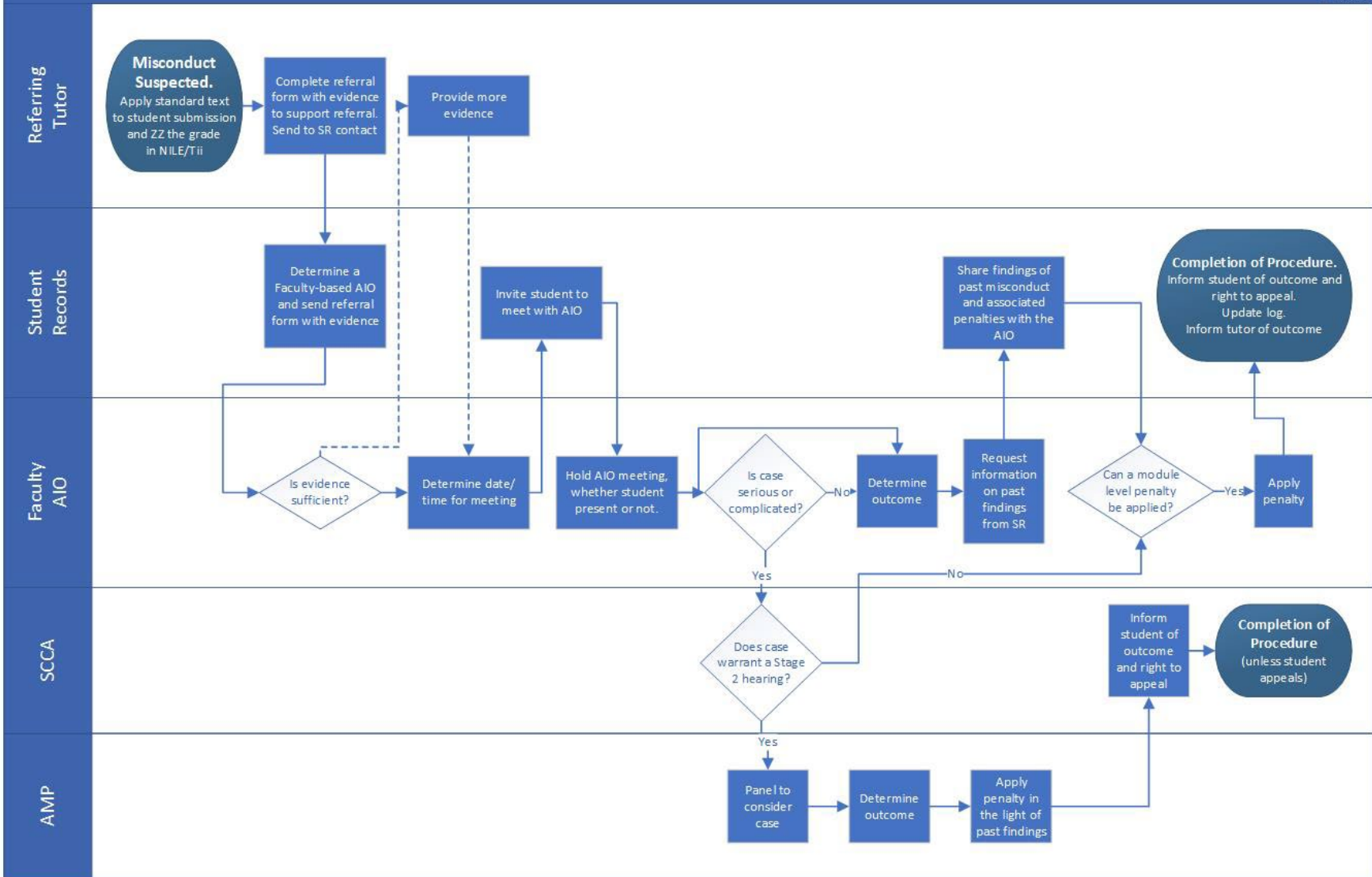
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Summary Sheet

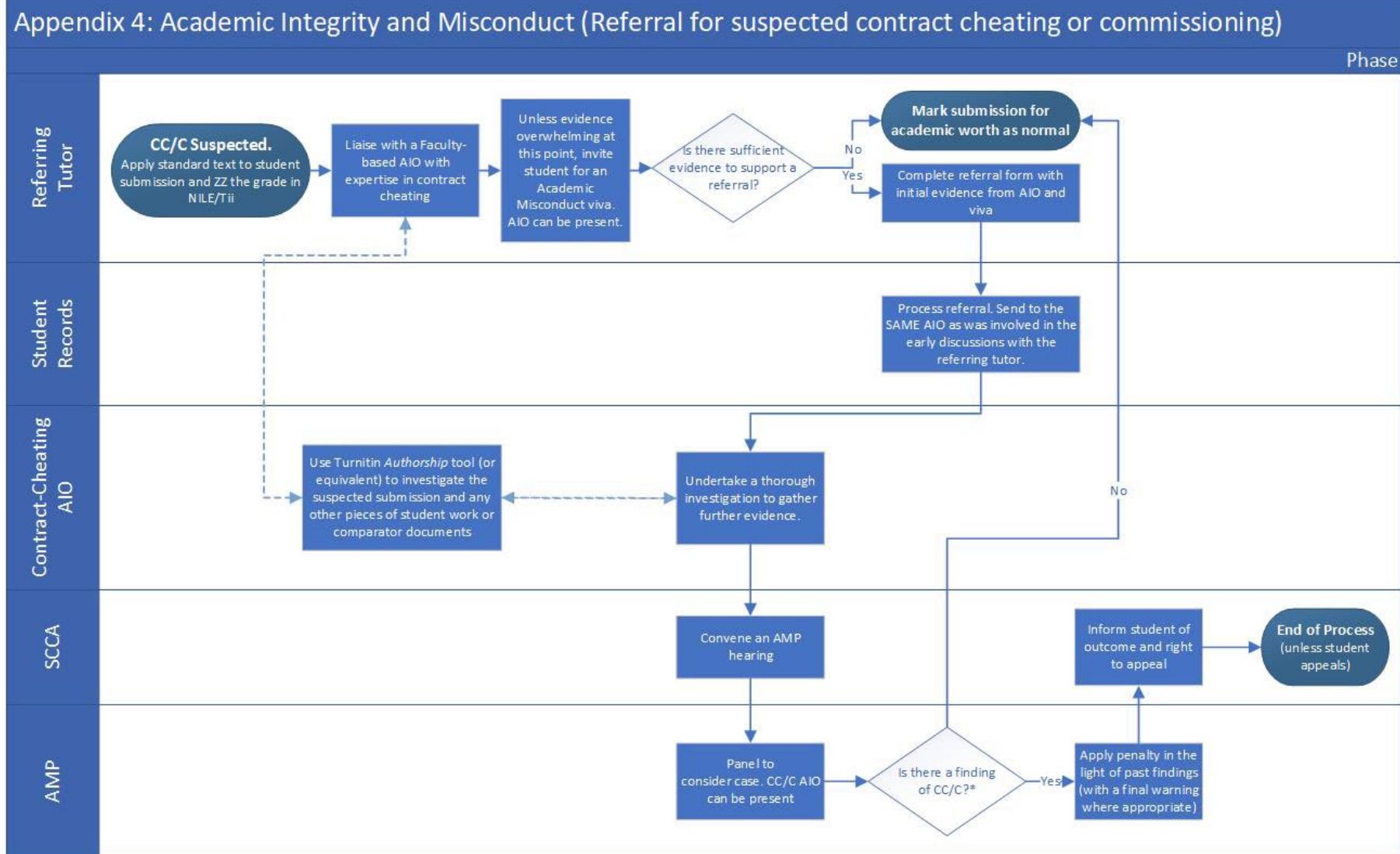
Policy Title	
Academic Integrity & Misconduct Policy	
Purpose of Policy and to whom it applies (please specify cohorts):	
<p>The purpose of this policy is threefold:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) To inform students of the expectations for and processes around academic integrity at the University of Northampton. 2) To support academic staff in promoting academic integrity among learners on taught and research programmes across the University of Northampton. 3) To outline, for other relevant stakeholders, the processes for promoting academic integrity across the University. <p>This policy applies to all staff, students and other stakeholders who are involved in promoting academic integrity across the University of Northampton and at Partner institutions.</p>	
Owner and Department:	
Head of Learning and Teaching Enhancement	
Principal contact:	
<p>Interim Academic Registrar, Julie Martin, julie.martin@northampton.ac.uk Academic Integrity Lead, Robin Crockett, robin.crockett@northampton.ac.uk</p>	
Dissemination and implementation plan:	
<p>Via SEC will go to Senate for approval. Via Web and FSEC's</p>	
Date of initial committee approval (state committee name):	SEC 10 June 2020 V1.2 approved by AQSC Chair's Action, Jan 2021
Date of Senate approval:	1 July 2020
Date for implementation and cohorts to which it applies:	August 2023 for all cohorts, including partner institutions.
Proposed date of annual update:	August 2023
Date of last annual update:	June 2022
Proposed date of full review:	2023/24
Date of last full review:	July 2020
Version number and date:	V1.3

Appendix 3: Academic Integrity and Misconduct (Standard Referral)

Phase



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* If the Panel determine that misconduct has occurred, but that it is not contract-cheating or commissioning specifically, they can apply any of the available penalties from the tariff in the Academic Integrity Policy.