



POINT BLANK

MUSIC SCHOOL

PROCEDURE 003

Academic Misconduct Procedure and Flow Chart

DOCUMENT CONTROL BOX

People in scope:					
All students	HE Students	Professional Students	All staff and students	Staff only	
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Document Revision History

Version Log

Committee / Approval Date	Author	Version	Publication Date	Page Reference & Summary
Academic Board 25 th November 2024	Assessments Manager / Registrar	1	9 th December 2024	Renamed from 'Academic Misconduct Flow Chart' to 'Academic Misconduct Procedure and Flow Chart' Re-written to encapsulate changes in Middlesex University Policy and include Viva Voce process.

Related Documentation

Document Reference No. (Policy version / Supporting doc. #)	Document Type	Link or Dept. Owner	Document Title
POL_003	Policy	Registry	Academic Integrity and Misconduct Policy

1. PURPOSE

1.1 The purpose of this procedure is to outline Point Blank's approach to the handling of academic misconduct cases.

1.2 This procedure must be read in conjunction with Section F of the Middlesex University Academic Regulations for Taught Undergraduate awards.

2. PROCEDURE DETAILS

2.1 The academic misconduct procedure is handled by staff at Point Blank.

Handling academic misconduct allegations - Formal written examinations:

2.2 Where an invigilator suspects a candidate of infringing examination room rules, they shall, if possible, in the presence of another invigilator to act as witness to the action taken:

- Confiscate any unauthorised material in the possession of the candidate.
- Endorse the candidate's script on the front cover with a note of the time when the alleged infringement is discovered. In the case of suspected collusion they should endorse the script of each candidate involved. Wherever possible they should require another invigilator to act as witness by countersigning the endorsement;
- Issue a new examination script booklet to the candidate(s) in question, clearly instructing them to continue (not to restart) the examination;
- Inform the candidate(s) in question, at the end of the examination, that a report of the incident will be submitted to the Academic Misconduct Team;
- Complete an Infringement of Exam Rules Report detailing the incident, and giving the opportunity to the student to comment on the report, and both invigilator and student sign and date it.
- Enter details of the incident on the invigilator's report;
- Report the allegation to Academic Misconduct Team for processing.
- Where an internal or external examiner suspects a candidate of infringing examination room rules they shall:
 - attach a cover note to the script detailing the alleged infringement;
 - Report the allegation to the Assessments Team for processing.

Handling academic misconduct allegations - Assessed coursework (including oral examinations, exhibitions, performances, assignments):

- 2.3 Where an internal or external examiner suspects a candidate of contravening the regulations in assessed coursework, they shall, where appropriate:
- Discuss the allegation with the Module Leader or Programme Leader
 - Notify the Assessments Team using the Academic Misconduct detected button on the assignment feedback page.

Handling academic misconduct allegations - Initial Investigation of assessed coursework

- 2.4 If academic misconduct is alleged due to unauthorised use of A.I. the student may be requested to attend a viva voce assessment with their Lecturer and / or a member of the Academic Misconduct Panel.
- 2.5 If the Academic Misconduct Panel confirms Category A misconduct, and the student does not require a resubmission opportunity after the assignment is marked by the Lecturer, the student should be called in to meet with the Module Leader or Programme Leader and be given support and guidance, along with written advice of where they can seek help (eg. Academic Writing Workshops)
- 2.6 If misconduct is confirmed due to unauthorised use of A.I. the student must also attend a compulsory ethical use of A.I. workshop.

Records and categorisation

- 2.7 Misconduct offences should be reported by the Department to the Academic Misconduct Team for monitoring purposes.
- 2.8 If the AMT confirms Category B – D misconduct the case should be investigated. The deadline by which evidence supporting an allegation of academic misconduct to be submitted by the Department should normally be no more than one month after the completion date for that component of assessment.

- 2.9 If a viva voce assessment of the student is considered appropriate before an allegation is reported to the Secretary to Academic Board, it must not be treated as a formal hearing to consider academic misconduct.
- 2.10 Exceptionally, where serious academic misconduct is discovered after the deadline for submission of an allegation of academic misconduct, an allegation may be pursued retrospectively under these procedures. Where a student has already graduated, the outcome may result in the revoking of a qualification already awarded.
- 2.11 Whilst an investigation is being carried out, the Assessment Board may note the incident and defer judgement. A holding grade of U (allegation of academic misconduct under investigation) should be entered by the Programme Administrator on the student's module record (for cross-reference with other alleged infringements).
- 2.12 To proceed with an investigation into an allegation of academic misconduct, the following where appropriate should be submitted to the Academic Misconduct Team using the Academic Misconduct button on the assignment feedback page:
- The student(s)'s name and number.
 - A report of the incident; (use the form: academic misconduct allegation)
 - The invigilator's report.
 - Originals of scripts involved in alleged infringement of examination room rules.
 - Copy or original of unauthorised material used in an examination; for coursework (module leader)
 - Completed academic misconduct referral form
 - Copy or original work with plagiarised passages marked.
 - Copy of source material with passages which have been plagiarised marked.
 - Summary of any informal interview with the student regarding the incident (it is preferred that no interview takes place before a written allegation is put to the candidate by the secretary to academic board).
 - Notes of any viva that has taken place.
 - Copy of the instructions given to the candidate regarding the component and a copy of the referencing instructions given to the candidate.

Procedure for investigation by the Academic Misconduct Team

- 2.13 As soon as reasonably practicable following receipt of any allegation and supporting documentation, the Academic Misconduct Team shall decide if there are reasonable grounds at first sight to suggest the candidate contravened assessment regulations.
- 2.14 If the Academic Misconduct Team determines there are no reasonable grounds, they shall request the Assessment Board to consider the work on its academic merits and remove all record of the alleged misconduct from the student's record.
- 2.15 If the Academic Misconduct Team determines there are reasonable grounds to suggest the candidate has contravened the regulations in assessment, they shall write to the student(s) concerned:
To put the allegation.
- I. If appropriate, to enclose copies of any evidence or report.
 - II. Request a written statement to explain how the allegation may have arisen, stating any mitigating circumstances which may be taken into account when considering a penalty (authenticated evidence to be provided where appropriate).
 - III. To request a reply within 10 working days of the date on which the letter is sent and explaining the consequences of failure to reply. To refer to guidance notes on myunihub and the MDXSU Student Support Service

Student Response

- 2.16 If a written reply to the allegation is not received from the student within 10 working days of the date on which the letter is sent, or if the student replies accepting the allegation, the Academic Misconduct Team shall report accordingly to the Secretary to Academic Board and recommend an appropriate penalty to be communicated to the Chair of the Assessment Board.
- For Category B and C offences, where the penalty does not involve retaking a module, the Secretary to Academic Board will have the authority to impose the penalty and inform the student and Chair of the Faculty Assessment Board of the outcome

- If the student does reply within the time limit denying the charge the Secretary to Academic Board shall consider the allegation in the light of the students response and in consultation with the AMT and/or other appropriate members of staff in order to decide whether to dismiss the allegation, or to proceed and to convene a Panel of Investigation.

Panel to investigate the allegation of academic misconduct

2.17 Following the processes listed above, and if appropriate, the Chair of Academic Board shall convene a Panel of Investigation which shall consist of two members of staff drawn from Senior Staff of the School – including Heads of Department; Programme Leaders; together with one Student Representative.

- Staff involved in the assessment of the student shall be required to attend as witnesses.
- The Chair of the Panel shall be the Secretary to Academic Board. For panels held overseas, the role of Chair may be delegated.
- No member of staff who has been involved in teaching or assessing the student shall be eligible to serve on the Panel.
- The student will be given 10 working days' notice, wherever possible, of the date, time, place and Panel membership, together with any documents to be consulted by the Panel.
- The student may object to the appointment of members of the Panel and to the date giving grounds for the objection. However, any change to the arrangement is solely at the discretion of the Chair.
- Due notice of the Panel of Investigation meeting will be considered to have been given on sending the notice and supporting information to the student's last recorded email address. At the discretion of the Panel the case may then be heard whether or not the student attends the meeting.

2.18 All proceedings and papers associated with the meeting shall be strictly confidential to those invited to attend.

2.19 The student shall have the right to be accompanied by a companion and to submit oral or written evidence. Legal representation is not allowed or considered appropriate at a Panel meeting.

Procedure for the Panel of Investigation in session

- 2.20 The Panel of Investigation may not be held in the absence of the Secretary to Academic Board
- 2.21 The Chair has discretion to organise the meeting as they see fit in order to achieve the principal aims of a hearing
- to clarify evidence as necessary by questioning those who have submitted it;
 - to enable the student to dispute the allegation;
 - to enable the Panel to reach a decision.

Mechanical, electrical or electronic recording by any means shall be prohibited.

- 2.22 The Panel shall consider its decision in private after the evidence has been heard and shall reach a decision by majority vote, in the light of the evidence presented and on the balance of probabilities, whether the student infringed assessment regulations. If the votes cast are equal, the Chair shall have a second or casting vote.
- 2.23 The student and their companion shall normally be recalled for the Chair to inform them of the decision of the Panel which will be in the form of a recommendation to the Assessment Board. The recommendation in writing will be sent to the student normally within five working days of the Panel meeting.

Decision of the Assessment Board

- 2.24 Where an allegation of academic misconduct is not sustained following investigation, the work shall be assessed on its academic merit, and all record of the alleged misconduct shall be removed from the student's record.
- 2.25 Where an allegation of academic misconduct is sustained, either by admission of the student or following investigation, the Assessment Board shall:
- receive the recommendation of the Secretary to Academic Board or Panel (except when B4b applies) and decide on a course of action;
 - report its decision to the Secretary to Academic Board for recording and monitoring purposes.
 - Should an Assessment Board agree that a student be expelled from the University then the Chair will inform the Secretary to Academic Board. The Secretary to Academic Board will issue the notification of expulsion. Copies of the notification shall be sent to the appropriate Dean of Faculty and President of Students Union.
 - Any reassessment following the Assessment Board's decision to fail the student in one or more units of assessment shall be at the absolute discretion of the Assessment Board under the programme assessment regulations.
- 2.26 A student may appeal against the decision of the Assessment Board to impose a penalty. Such an appeal will be made through the established appeal procedures and must be received by the Secretary to Academic Board within 10 working days of the decision being issued. The only subsequent involvement of the Secretary to Academic Board will be to refer the appeal for decision to a senior manager with appropriate academic background. Normally an appeal may be made on the following grounds:
- That there is new and relevant evidence which the student was demonstrably and for the most exceptional reasons unable to present to the Secretary to Academic Board or Panel of Investigation meeting.
 - That the procedures were not complied with in such a way that it might cause reasonable doubt as to whether the result would have been different had they been complied with.

- That there is documented evidence of prejudice or bias on the part of the Secretary to Academic Board or by one or more members of the Panel of Investigation.
- That the penalty imposed exceeds the maximum penalties listed in Table F5.

Guidelines for penalties for Academic Misconduct (Regulation section F4)

- 2.27 The minimum penalty imposed shall normally exceed that which would follow if the student had merely failed the assessment.
- 2.28 All cases will sit on a sliding case of severity. As a result, the examples given in Table H in Section F of the Middlesex University Academic Regulations must be taken as indicative of the maximum penalties which may be imposed.
- 2.29 All confirmed offences must be recorded on the student's record as grade P. This grade to remain throughout the student's registration at Middlesex University and to be replaced on formal documents by grade 20.
- 2.30 All records of disproved offences must be deleted from the student record.
- 2.31 A student may appeal against the decision of the Assessment Board to impose a penalty. (see Section D3 of the Middlesex University Academic Regulations)

3. PROCEDURE SCOPE

- 3.1 This procedure applies to all students on Middlesex-validated programmes at Point Blank London and Point Blank Online.
- 3.2 This procedure does not apply to students on Point Blank Short Courses (formerly known as professional courses).

4. PROCEDURE OWNER

- 4.1 This policy is under the responsibility of the Academic Board. The responsible committee will ensure the cyclical review of this policy is carried out in line with Point Blank's Quality Assurance Framework.
- 4.2 The Academic Board delegates the operational responsibility of this policy to the following staff:
- Registrar

- Assessment Manager
- Programme and Assessment Officers

5. EXHIBITS, APPENDICES AND FORMS

5.1. Appendix 1: Academic Misconduct Flow Chart

5.2. Appendix 2: Table F5

6. REFERENCES AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

6.1 Internal

- Learning, teaching and assessment strategy

6.2 External

- Middlesex University Regulations for Taught Undergraduate Programmes
- OIA good practice framework

Appendix 1: Academic Misconduct Flow Chart

