

Academic Integrity
Coventry University Group
Academic Conduct procedures
general staff briefing Sept 2023

Dr Irene Glendinning
Academic Integrity Lead
Office of Teaching and Learning

Agenda

- Group strategy for academic integrity
- Education for Academic Integrity – topics for student journey
- Changes to regulations and documentation for 2023
- Academic conduct process – meetings and roles

Academic Integrity Strategy

- Consistent approach across the group
- Supported by clear guidance for all
- Education-led
- Steering group monitoring
- Improved statistics
- Working with students

Education for Academic Integrity

Training on academic writing, ethical and study skills throughout study, all semesters, all years, building knowledge and skills

Pre-arrival guidance on academic integrity

Induction quiz, video, diagnostic writing

Initial education about academic integrity and ethical conduct – don't forget late arrivals

Library skills, finding and understanding academic sources

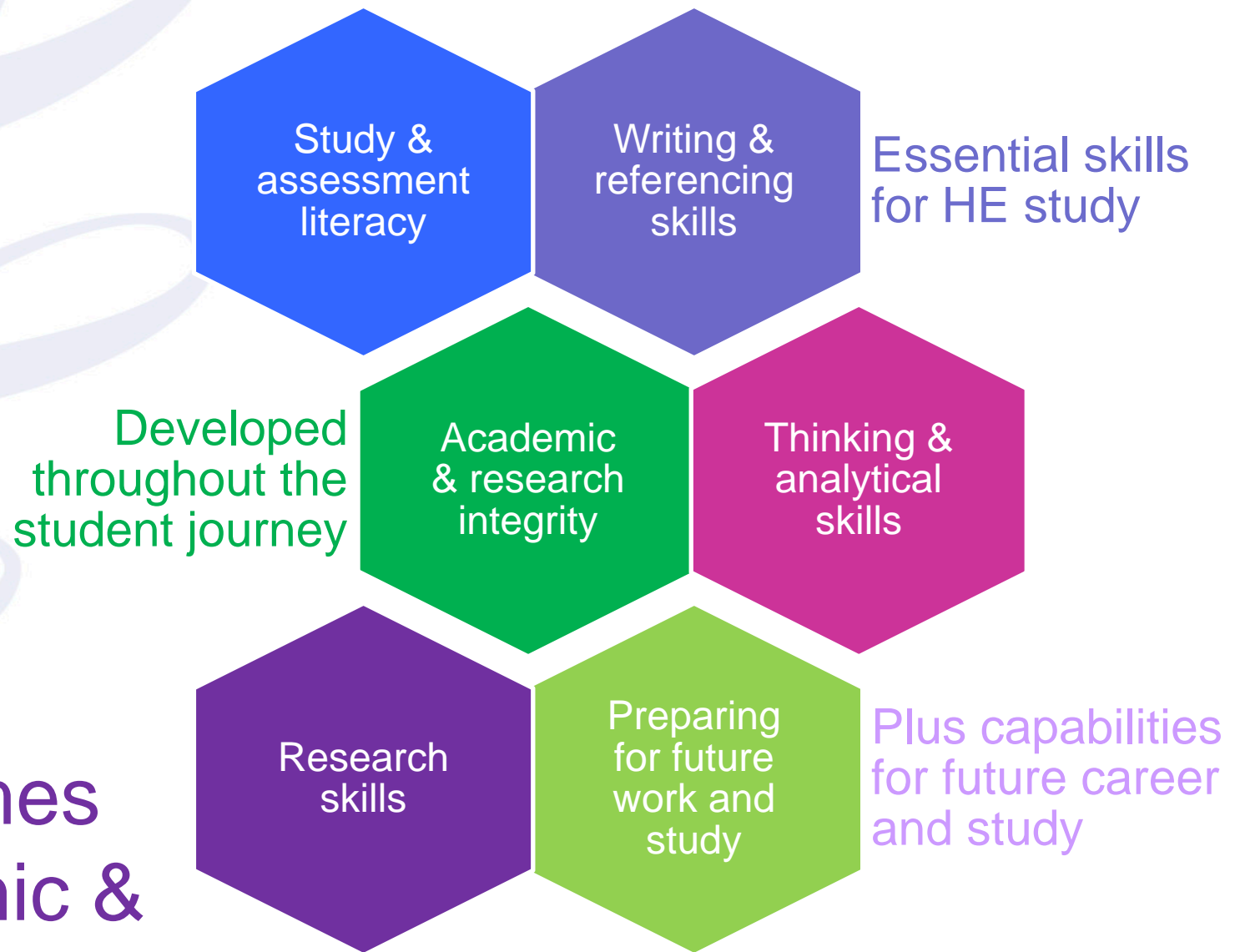
Academic writing, referencing, paraphrasing, critical thinking

Tutorial specific to student's needs

Action plan, monitoring and support

Corrective guidance and support following academic misconduct

Educational themes relating to academic & research integrity



Knowledge & skills relating to academic integrity

Study skills, expectations	Evaluating & using sources	Language skills	Interpreting similarity reports	Collecting information, note-taking
Academic writing	Paraphrasing	Digital literacy	Referencing & citation	Avoiding academic misconduct allegations
Critical thinking, rhetoric	Editing, reviewing, summarising	Exam protocol	Reporting academic dishonesty	Academic integrity
Managing and protecting data	Ethical conduct and approval	Research skills	Data collection methods & protocols	Creativity, analytical skills
Employability and professional skills	Time and project management	Effective team-working	Giving and responding to feedback	Literacy on transformative and generative AI tools

Academic Conduct

Coventry University Group

- Academic Conduct Panel (ACP) chair leads local team: Panel = Chair 1+ ACO, 1 other
- Parallel process for research / ethical misconduct: Ethics Leads and Ethics Panel Chair
- Local registry team coordinates, records, advises on regulations
- Senior Academic Conduct Officers (ACOs) triage allegations – is there a case to answer?
- ACOs manage routine cases, ACPs hear complex and very serious cases
- Group-wide consistency of approach achieved by
 - ACO Guidance Notes + Scale of Outcomes Table
 - Benchmarking of ACO decisions by an ACP
 - Regular training for ACOs
 - Regular training for all other staff
- Monitoring by steering Group (AISG), reporting to QuiLT (Quality in learning and teaching)
- Academic Integrity Unit, overall coordination and support, pro-activity
- All follow General Regulations Appendix 1

Academic conduct procedures

Registry / Lead ACO: Triaging

Is there a case to answer?

Yes: Assign ACO to case
No: pass back to tutor
More evidence needed or mark on merit

ACO/EL: Initial decision

Consider evidence,

NCTA
PAP
Minor + Contract cheating
Collusion

Mark on merit
Schedule ACO meeting
Schedule AC Viva
Schedule ACP

ACO/EL meeting

Present evidence, student responds

Decision on severity
History considered
Decision on outcomes using table and guidance notes

Guidance for student on next steps & educational element

AC/EC viva

Academic process
Extra assessment
Student asked about process, content, sources, support etc.
Student responds

Decision: Learning outcomes met?
Yes: NCTA
No: schedule ACO or ACP meeting

AC/EC Panel

ACP meets
Registrar advises
ACOa presents the case
Student responds

Panel of 3 plus registrar
ACO presents case
Students responds, panel asks questions
Decision taken

Appeal, mitigation: Registry

Are there valid grounds

Yes: Pass to ACP

No: refuse request

Academic Conduct documentation

- **General Regulations Appendix 1 – many changes 2023-24 version:** <https://www.coventry.ac.uk/the-university/key-information/registry/general-regulations/?theme=main>
- **Registry page** <https://share.coventry.ac.uk/staff/ps/Registry/Pages/Academic-and-Research-Integrity.aspx>
 - Staff Handbook – Sept 2023 version
 - Scale of Outcomes Table - Sept 2023
 - Academic Conduct Officer (ACO) Guidance notes – Sept 2023
 - Case record V1.5 replaces meeting record form > outcomes letter
 - Student history form Sept 2023 version
 - Template for recording data on cases 2022-23 and 2023-24
- **Student guidance notes:** <https://share.coventry.ac.uk/students/Registry/Pages/Academic-and-Research-Integrity.aspx>

Changes to Regulations, GR Appendix 1

- Lead time for ACO meeting now 5 days
- Collusion cases – students may attend ACO meeting alone
- Minor changes to definition of academic misconduct
- Disclaimer about use of software to aid detection of suspected academic misconduct

2023-24: Definition of academic misconduct

1.6.1 Academic misconduct includes ethical misconduct and is defined as:

- a) any attempt to gain an unfair advantage in an assessment (including examinations/tests). This includes (but is not confined to):
 - List 1: types of academic misconduct
- b) failure to observe the University's Principles and Standards of Conduct on the Governance of Applied Research, including:
 - List 2: types of research misconduct
- c) assisting another student to do any of the above.

List 1: Definition of academic misconduct, page 1 of 3

1.6.1 Academic misconduct includes ethical misconduct and is defined as:

- a) any attempt to gain an unfair advantage in an assessment (including examinations/tests). This includes (but is not confined to):
 - i) copying from other students;
 - ii) collusion - unauthorised sharing of solutions and working with others when individual work is required;
 - iii) impersonation - arranging for someone else to complete a test or examination on one's behalf;
 - iv) plagiarism - presenting the work of others without acknowledging the sources and submitting it as if it is one's own work;
 - v) submitting work that has been wholly or partially written by a third party, (contract cheating – requesting work to be completed on one's behalf by a colleague, friend, family member, essay mill, ghost-writer etc.);
 - vi) self-plagiarism, - the unacknowledged or un-referenced re-presentation of one's own work (the submission of work presented previously or simultaneously for summative assessment at this or any other institution), unless explicitly allowed;
 - vii) unauthorised access to unseen examination papers or model answers;
 - viii) attempted or proven bribery;
 - ix) falsification or fabrication of data or results in projects, surveys or other assessed work;

continued...

List 1: Definition of academic misconduct, p 2 of 3

1.6.1 Academic misconduct includes ethical misconduct and is defined as:

- a) any attempt to gain an unfair advantage in an assessment (including examinations/tests). This includes (but is not confined to):
 - x) the act of uploading assessment tasks, course materials, solutions or other coursework to a website, social media or other such portal;
 - xi) making a request, via a website, social media or other such portal, to ask for help with completing assessment tasks, or to request the provision of a finished or partially finished assignment;
 - xii) **Unauthorised or unacknowledged** use of technological aids and artificial intelligence, including translation software, paraphrasing tools, text generation software (essay bots), and tools to **generate programming code**, graphics or artwork;
 - xiii) where an assignment is required to be written in **a specified language**, writing **all or most of it** in another language and then using translation software or assistance from a third party to convert into the specified language;
 - xiv) deception - converting text to graphical objects, screenshots, hidden or special fonts and characters in one's work in an attempt to disguise plagiarism, reduce the text similarity percentage or change the word count;
 - xv) misrepresentation – including invented or irrelevant references, or copying an entire reference list from another source into one's own work;

Continued...

List 1: Definition of academic misconduct, page 3 of 3

1.6.1 Academic misconduct includes ethical misconduct and is defined as:

a) any attempt to gain an unfair advantage in an assessment (including examinations/tests).
This includes (but is not confined to):

xvi) switching off a web cam or microphone during a remote on-line examination/test, or leaving the view of the camera;

xvii) attempting to communicate with anyone other than the invigilator during an examination/test, including anyone else being in the room where a remote examination/test is taking place;

xviii) having access to unauthorised materials in an examination room/assessment space. This includes any calculator or dictionary not permitted under General Regulations appendices 8 and 9, pencil cases, manuals for calculators, spare paper or any notes written on anything, including parts of the body;

xix) having access to a mobile telephone, electronic equipment including watch, technology-enabled spectacles and other devices in an examination room/assessment space, whether switched off or not;

xx) refusal to provide evidence when asked about whether or not one has access to unauthorised equipment or material

List 2: Definition of ethical and research misconduct

Failure to observe the University's Principles and Standards of Conduct on the Governance of Applied Research, including:

- i) failure to follow accepted procedures/codes of practice, or to exercise due care in carrying out responsibilities for avoiding unreasonable risk or harm to: humans; animals; cells, blood, tissues; the environment; the reputation of the University;
- ii) failure to obtain ethical approval for an assessment submission;
- iii) late submission of ethical approval applications, including cases where data has already been collected (which may involve deception);
- iv) breach of ethical approval conditions, including deviations from an approved research design;
- v) failure to renew or reapply for ethical approval when changes have occurred that have ethical implications;
- vi) failure to safeguard data, as well as the inappropriate handling of privileged or private information on individuals collected during research;
- vii) failure to follow the Computer Use, Data Management and Data Protection policies specific to storing and destroying data securely;
- viii) fabrication, falsification and misrepresentation of information contained within an ethics application (including misrepresentation of possible conflicts of interest and risk).

When to report suspicions and how

- Level of severity: No case to answer (NCTA), poor academic practice (PAP), **Minor, Moderately Serious, Serious, Very serious**
- Staff handbook contains guidance on how to categorise the level of severity
- If in any doubt please check with an academic conduct officer (ACO), they will advise whether or not to raise a case
- To raise a case complete the details in Part 1 of the Case record form and send this together with the evidence to your local Registry team

When to report suspicions

Poor academic practice: Very minor infringements, typically poor referencing, with no intent to deceive, often quotations marks missing but in-text citation given; excessive use of correctly marked-up quotations with little original content, where some attempt has been made to reference or attribute sources; A few instances of poor paraphrasing, too close to the original wording, with source identified

Minor: Similar to poor academic practice but rather more extensive; several sections of text copied from different sources, not properly marked up as quotations, or suitably/sufficiently paraphrased but most copied sources may include attempts to identify sources, e.g. paragraph starts “Smith (2014) found that...”; text may include in-text citations copied directly from the original source; One or two copied diagrams and charts not attributed; Several sections of unattributed self-plagiarism in new work, (does not apply to re-worked resits)

More details in Staff Handbook for Academic Integrity Appendix 2

Reporting and not reporting suspicions

- Poor academic practice (PAP) – Mark on Merit, but ensure appropriate guidance is provided – ask student to attend academic integrity workshop ([CAW - LibCal - Coventry University](#))
- **Minor, Moderately Serious, Serious, Very serious – these cases must be formally reported**
- If a case is not reported: the student will not get appropriate advice and guidance; they will continue to make mistakes; no record will exist – we will not detect serial misconduct
- If the correct procedures are not followed, the student has grounds for a successful appeal against any informal penalties

PROCEDURES FOR ACO MEETINGS 1

Suspicious

- Tutor marking work suspects academic misconduct
- Other sources of suspicion come to light
- If in any doubt, tutor checks with ACO before raising a case

Reporting

- Supporting evidence assembled by tutor
- Section 1 Academic Conduct Case Record completed
- If any information not available, leave the field blank
- Form and evidence sent to registry team

Allegation recorded

- Registry team record the case and complete any missing fields
- Documents passed to Lead ACO for triaging
- ACO decides whether there is a case to answer, if yes ...
- ACO assigned either by Lead ACO or Registry and sent the evidence

Initial decision

- ACO checks the evidence, uses the SOT and guidance if needed
- A range of decision options is available in Section 2 of Case Record
- Case to answer: ACO decides level of severity, based on evidence provided
- Section 2 completed and Case Record returned to registry team

Your ACO/ACP appointment letter explains the provisional level of seriousness of the allegation as assigned by the Academic Conduct Officer (ACO) based on evidence for this case; this level may change up or down as a result of the ACO meeting. Academic and disciplinary outcomes will apply as set out in the table below.

If you are studying at Level 3 (pre-degree) then Preliminary Case (Column i) will apply to all allegations that arise during this programme. First Case (Column ii) outcomes will apply after you transfer to Level 4 (degree programme).

If you are a new student studying at Level 4 or above and have not yet received formative or summative feedback from any assessments, the Preliminary Case (Column i) will normally apply. If you face a second allegation following an upheld Preliminary Case, then the First Case (Column ii) will apply. First Case (Column ii) applies if this is your first case, but not your first assessment period: go to the row in the table below that corresponds to the severity of the Case and read off the Outcomes shown for a First Case; Example: Letter states - **Moderately Serious** > (Column ii) Academic Outcome – **Zero mark for this assessment; Mandatory Training** and Disciplinary Outcome - **Formal warning letter**. If a second allegation follows a previously upheld First Case then the Second Case (Column iii) outcomes will apply, varying according to the severity of the second case, as stated in your letter. Outcomes for Third and Subsequent Cases (Column iv) will be applied in a similar way. If you fully engage with the Mandatory Training and support provided, it is unlikely you will have to face a second or third case.

Severity of this Case	Column i		Column ii		Column iii		Column iv	
	Preliminary Case		First Case		Second Case		Third or Subsequent Case	
	Academic Outcome	Disciplinary Outcome	Academic Outcome	Disciplinary Outcome	Academic Outcome	Disciplinary Outcome	Academic Outcome	Disciplinary Outcome
No case to answer	If an allegation about academic misconduct is not upheld, the student will be sent a letter to say that no evidence was found to support the allegation, and no record will be kept of the case. The work will be marked on merit, there is no detriment to the student and no penalty is incurred.							
Poor Academic Practice	Very minor infringements, typically poor referencing, are not recorded on the student record and do not count as an upheld Case. The work will be marked on merit and, importantly, the marker must ensure that relevant Mandatory Training is provided to improve the student’s academic skills.							
Minor	Mark on merit; Mandatory Training	Local advice letter	Mark on merit; Mandatory Training	Local advice letter	Mark on merit; refer for guidance	Formal warning letter	Mark on merit; refer for guidance	Final Written Warning *
Moderately Serious	Zero mark for this assessment; Mandatory Training	Local advice letter	Zero mark for this assessment; Mandatory Training	Formal warning letter	Zero mark for the component; refer for guidance	Formal warning letter	Zero mark for the whole module; refer for guidance	Final Written Warning *; for 4 th case, Temporary or Permanent exclusion from the University
Serious	Zero mark for this assessment; Mandatory Training	Formal warning letter	Zero mark for the component; Mandatory Training	Formal warning letter	Zero mark for the whole module, refer for guidance	Final Written Warning *	Zero mark for the whole module; refer for guidance	Temporary or Permanent exclusion from the University
Very Serious	Zero mark for the component; Mandatory Training	Formal warning letter	Zero mark for the whole module; Mandatory Training; refer for guidance	Final Written Warning	Zero mark for the whole module; refer for guidance	Temporary or Permanent exclusion from the University	Zero mark for the whole module; refer for guidance	Temporary or Permanent exclusion from the University

The ACO or Academic Conduct Panel may make recommendations to the module leader, should a resit opportunity be available, whether the same assignment could be reworked, or a new assignment provided for you. Decisions on your progression will be made by the Programme Assessment Board.

A copy of this table and other guidance can be found here: <https://share.coventry.ac.uk/students/Registry/Pages/Academic-and-Research-Integrity.aspx>



PROCEDURES FOR ACO MEETINGS 2

Invitation letter

- Registry & ACO agree date for ACO meeting with minimum 5 days' notice
- Letter sent to student using template provided
- Letter encourages student to contact Your SU for support & representation
- Case record and student history form sent to ACO

ACO meeting part 1

- Student attends meeting with supporter, friend or Your SU representative
- Supportive meeting, evidence presented, student responds
- ACO makes decision on severity and completes section 3 of Case Record

ACO Meeting part 2

- ACO opens Student History form - determines which column of the SOT to use
- ACO makes decision on outcomes and communicates these to student
- ACO completes section 4 of Case Record, including any statements from participants
- Guidance given to student on referral, mandatory training options and booking link
- Case Record completed and customised by ACO, then sent to registry team

Outcomes

- Registry checks Case Record details and if needed communicates with ACO
- Academic conduct template updated to record outcomes, student record updated
- Case Record sent to student's university email, cc ACO
- Person raising the allegation, student's Course Director and ML notified of outcomes

PROCEDURES FOR ACO MEETINGS 3

Mandatory Training

- Student meets advisor as agreed (eg ACO, CD, ML) > action plan
- Student books and attends workshop
- Student reports back to advisor and provides feedback on the experience

Lack of attendance

- Second opportunity may be given to attend of circumstances warrant this
- If failure to attend meeting or engage with mandatory training > decision taken in the absence of the student

Sanctions / penalties / outcomes

- Preliminary column also applies to level 3 students, throughout
- Each outcome based on severity level for that case
- ACO needs approval from ACP chair to vary outcomes to allow for individual circumstances
- ACO to document and justify all decisions, careful use of language
- Closing the loop: notify relevant people, including those who raised suspicions, about the outcomes and decisions
- Education is part of the outcome

Outcomes: the educational element

- Workshops designed to meet student needs
- Scheduled on-line workshop or one-to-one meeting
- Quiz to test knowledge of academic integrity
- Videos by Diane Irving, Stella-Maris Orim, Mary Davis
<https://web.microsoftstream.com/channel/6a600163-95f8-47b8-bff0-2e52db2c68e5>
- (academic Integrity, Referencing, Using Turnitin, Academic conduct offences)
<https://www.youtube.com/user/izegbua/videos>
- (7 videos on Avoiding plagiarism – Turnitin editing and resubmitting etc)
- [Video for students on Turnitin by Mary Davis, Oxford Brookes](#)

Academic integrity: a role for all staff

- Understand and follow the strategy, regulations and procedures
- Provide students with education, guidance on academic integrity
- Consult with ACO, ACP chair if unsure whether to raise a case
- Be vigilant, may report threats & concerns to integritythreats@coventry.ac.uk
- Collecting evidence: ask for help, eg Authorship report, ACV
- Serve as member of ACP – burden of proof = balance of probabilities, guided by ACP chair
- Referral for giving guidance to student on mandatory training
- Attend training, staff development, updates, reminders
- Effective design of ILOs, assessments and assessment criteria

Messages to students

- The University provides a lot of high quality support services to help you to succeed, please make use of them rather than relying on poor quality and potentially illegal external services
- You are here to learn, please make good use of your time with us, it will shape your future life
- Plagiarising, colluding with others, resorting to contract cheating (getting someone else to do your assessments for you) and other forms of cheating are very dangerous, for all these reasons:
 - We now have powerful tools that help us to detect and evidence all forms of academic misconduct – the tools and techniques we use are getting better all the time
 - Those who know a student has cheated may decide to blackmail them or report it to us right now or at any time in the future
 - The University has the power to zeroise any modules and rescind degrees, if cheating is discovered either before or at any time after graduation, it is not worth the risk
 - If you do not complete your own assessments you will have gaps in your learning, knowledge and skills that are likely to be identified by an employer in future, leading to your dismissal
 - Students found to have breached academic integrity during their studies, may become ineligible to register for professional practise when they graduate
 - Students facing allegations of academic misconduct may have delays to their progression and perhaps also their graduation
 - Essay mills do not care about the welfare or education of their student clients and they are known to sell off any personal details they have to the highest bidder

Recording upheld cases

- Note added to student's record (Minor cases and above)
- Reflected in student references
- Impacts on professional registration
- More serious outcomes applied for repeat cases
- Problem areas identified and addressed
- Trends monitored over time – targeted measures applied

(Adapted from Glendinning & Orim, 2023. p.36)

Student assessments need to be designed:

- To be an integral part of student learning and development
- For applying learning, knowledge and skills
- To evaluate the student's learning and understanding
- To provide constructive feedback on how the student can improve
- For praising, encouraging and rewarding excellence
- To evidence the student's achievements
- To contribute to the student's qualification grade
- To evaluate the process followed and critical thinking skills, not just knowledge

If students do not complete their own work:

- They have not fully benefited from learning and development opportunities
- They have not learnt how to apply their learning, knowledge and skills
- The evaluation of their learning and understanding is unreliable
- Any feedback will miss the target for helping to improve their weaknesses
- Any praise and reward for excellence is not deserved and unfair to other students
- The student's achievements are not known as the work is not by them
- The student's qualification grade will not accurately reflect their attainment

Consequences of students not completing their own work

Proof-reading guidance

- Limit / check who can proof-read
- Proof-readers need to follow the guidance
- Students required to keep draft of their work before the proof-reading

Turnitin

- All text-based submissions go through Turnitin
 - Features on Turnitin, similarity score, red flags
- Turnitin Authorship: ~25 License-holders
- Supports detection, evidencing of contract cheating
- Authorship report
 - Analyses portfolio of submitted work for one student
 - Linguistics, metadata, physical properties
- Student submissions: docx if possible not pdf
- Checklists for contract cheating and misuse of AI tools
- Turnitin's AI – Detector: Currently with limited access, under testing
- Guidance on Turnitin for both students and staff is on the Registry web pages shared earlier

Guidance for staff and students on use of AI tools

- Student use of artificial intelligence tools for
 - Paraphrasing
 - Translation
 - Text generation (essay bots)
 - Graphical object and video generation
 - Etc.
- Guidance notes and PPT for staff and use with students
- Guidance for students

Multiple suspicions of contract cheating

- Several anomalies can surface together for one student
- Usually some work already marked and confirmed
- Can manage these as a single case, details Handbook 5.3 and 5.4
- Also extract from 8.3:
 - The letter of notification to the student must set out the nature and purpose of the viva to be conducted and make clear what materials, if any, the student is required to bring with them and/or allowed to make use of during the viva;
 - The work that will be discussed should be clear to the student in the letter;
 - Should more than one assessment submission have raised suspicions, then full details should be explained in the letter (see 5.3 for more discussion about this);
- See new letter #13 for ACV

Academic Integrity Unit

- Oversight / Coordination / Steering group
- Providing support for ACOs and ACPs
- Developing more accessible guidance, for staff and students
- Maintaining Academic Integrity Handbook 2021
- Training and updating + Academic Development
- Proactivity, innovation in use of technology, automation
- Research and development
- Web site for staff: <https://share.coventry.ac.uk/staff/ps/OTL/AIU/Pages/default.aspx>
- aiu@Coventry.ac.uk integritythreats@Coventry.ac.uk

How you can help

- Make sure your students understand what you expect of them
- Design assessments that make any cheating difficult
- Submissions via Turnitin, docx if possible, not pdf
- Be vigilant for signs of cheating
- Follow up on all suspicions and ask for help if unsure
- Work with students and provide guidance and support
- Course wide:
 - Set a diagnostic assessment under controlled conditions
 - Provide a range of training related to academic integrity throughout the student journey – timing is important
 - Don't forget late starters

Statistics

- Monitoring for impact of changes
- Standardising what is recorded and how across the group
- Allegation (plagiarism, collusion, contract cheating, exam cheating, other)
- Level of severity (NCTA, Poor academic practice – Very serious),
- How many ACVs (vivas) and their outcomes
- Panel or ACO
- Panel referral after ACO and reason
- Preliminary, first, second, third, subsequent cases
- Outcomes
- Gender, ethnicity, course details, stage

ireneg@coventry.ac.uk

Integritythreats@coventry.ac.uk

aiu@coventry.ac.uk

CONTACT DETAILS

Resources for Coventry University Group

- Teaching Knowledge Base page:
<https://teach.coventry.domains/articles/academic-and-research-integrity/>
- Staff portal Registry page:
<https://share.coventry.ac.uk/staff/ps/Registry/Pages/Academic-and-Research-Integrity.aspx>
- Student portal Registry page:
<https://share.coventry.ac.uk/students/Registry/Pages/Academic-and-Research-Integrity.aspx>

References

Glendinning, I. (2022). Aligning academic quality and standards with academic integrity. In S. E. Eaton, G. Curtis, B. M. Stoesz, K. Rundle, J. Clare, & J. Seeland (Eds.), *Contract cheating in higher education: Global perspectives on theory, practice, and policy*. Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 199-218. DOI: [10.1007/978-3-031-12680-2](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-12680-2)

Glendinning, I., Orim, S.M. (2023). Comparison of Institutional Strategies for Academic Integrity in Europe and Eurasia. Bjelobaba, S., Foltýnek, T., Glendinning, I., Králíková, V., Dlabolová, D. (Eds) (2023). *Academic Integrity: Broadening Practices, Technologies, and the Role of Students. Springer series: Ethics and Education in Educational Contexts*, Volume 4, January 2023, pp 29-46. DOI: 10.1007/978-3-031-16976-2_3 <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-16976-2>