



Academic Integrity Policy (BNU Registered Students)

Version 5

Approved by the Board of Governors

Last Amendment: September 2024

The following establishes the School's definition of the behaviours which may constitute Academic Misconduct and sets out our investigative procedures for determining appropriate sanctions where such Academic Misconduct is found to have occurred.

This policy has been developed with due regard for the UK Quality Code for Higher Education and the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA). It should be read in conjunction with the relevant Assessment Regulations. The School proudly endorses and adheres to the [Academic Integrity Charter for UK Higher Education](#).

This policy has been developed with reference to the Buckinghamshire New University Academic Integrity Policy, to ensure consistent and accurate application of Academic policy procedures on all London School of Science and Technology campuses teaching Buckinghamshire New University students.

The procedures outlined herein are separate from those that deal with instances of non-academic Misconduct, which can be read in the School's *Student Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures*.



Document Information

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*The document owner is responsible for maintaining and updating the content of this document and ensuring that it reflects current practice at the School.

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. Academic Misconduct (sometimes termed “unfair practice”) consists of acts that either deliberately or inadvertently undermine the validity of an assessment, the certification of qualifications, and/or damage the authority of those responsible for conducting the assessment and certification.
- 1.2. The School expects its staff and students to act with integrity when undertaking or facilitating formative assessments; academic integrity means honesty and responsibility in scholarship and embodies values such as avoidance of cheating or plagiarism, maintenance of academic standards, and honesty and rigor in research. Therefore, all work submitted by a student should be a true and accurate representation of their own abilities and efforts.
- 1.3. This policy sets out the procedures to be followed where Academic Misconduct is suspected or identified in any formative assessment.
- 1.4. The School understands the consequences that allegations of Academic Misconduct can have on a student or staff member’s academic or professional standing, as well as their personal reputation. The School will therefore ensure that it has robust, fair and reliable procedures for determining if Academic Misconduct has occurred and will conduct its investigations confidentially; no acknowledgement of an investigation will be made to anyone not directly involved whilst that investigation is ongoing.

2. Scope

- 2.1. This policy applies to all students enrolled on a Buckinghamshire New University course taught at a London School of Science and Technology Campus.
- 2.2. This policy applies to all academic staff teaching at the London School of Science and Technology campuses, who have a duty to uphold and promote academic integrity.
- 2.3. This policy and its procedures apply to all internal assessments and examinations provided by Buckinghamshire New University and/or the London School of Science and Technology.
- 2.4. For more information on BNU’s process see:

<https://www.bucks.ac.uk/current-students/registry-helpdesk-and-academic-advice>

and for BNU’s Academic Integrity Policy, see:

<https://www.bucks.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2024-09/Academic%20Integrity%20Policy.pdf>
- 2.5. Anyone who is unsure on the correct procedure to be followed should contact the Registry Department: registry@lsst.ac
- 2.6. Program leaders and/or Course Leaders have a duty to ensure that any new teaching staff are introduced to this policy on induction and are confident in promoting



academic integrity in their workplace.

- 2.7. Students should be introduced to this policy during the induction period and reminded of the policy during preparation for assessments. Students should also be briefed on the correct form for referencing the work of others in their own submissions. The School uses the Harvard system of referencing and will provide students with comprehensive guidance on how to include proper citations and compile reference lists. It is the student's responsibility to act according to the policy and to seek advice and guidance if they are uncertain.
- 2.8. Students should be warned about the possible consequences of violating this policy on both their academic and professional careers and prospects.
- 2.9. Students may use the School's Student Complaints Policy to make a complaint about the extent to which the School has promoted academic integrity. This complaint will be examined separately into any academic misconduct investigation.
- 2.10. The student's grade or result will be withheld while the investigation is ongoing.

3. Responsibilities

- 3.1. The Registrar is responsible for the review and management of this policy. Registry and Course Leaders have a responsibility to ensure that this policy is adhered to and applied consistently across all London School of Science and Technology campuses.
- 3.2. Course Leaders, Module Leaders, and Course Coordinators will have overall responsibility for championing the promotion and maintenance of academic integrity.

4. Promoting and Maintaining Academic Integrity

- 4.1. The School will promote academic integrity by:
 - Ensuring that learners have reasonable opportunities to learn about the importance of academic integrity and the potential consequences of academic misconduct on their academic progress and future careers; by scheduling induction sessions and making information easily accessible through programme handbooks and other teaching materials, such as assessment briefs.
 - Ensuring that academic and frontline staff demonstrate academic integrity and serve as role models.
 - Annually reviewing, recording, and reporting on academic misconduct levels to identify and implement appropriate actions.
 - Utilising tools to detect and prevent breaches of integrity, including training about the use of plagiarism detection software for students, teachers, and professional services staff.



5. Student Responsibilities

- 5.1. In completing and submitting work, students have a responsibility to ensure that:
- The work they have produced is their own and has not been written by anyone else. Submitting work which is copied from or jointly written with others is not acceptable, with the exception of assessments which explicitly require collaboration.
 - They have properly and appropriately acknowledged any original sources used when mentioning another's work in their assessment. This must be done by following the School's Harvard Referencing system.
 - Their work accurately reflects data and information that has been obtained appropriately and ethically, representing their own efforts, knowledge, and understanding.
 - They do not reuse any work, or part of any work, that has already received credit for a new assessment. In exceptional cases where this may be allowed, the original work must be properly referenced according to the programme's guidelines.
- 5.2. The School will signpost where resources and information on maintaining academic integrity can be accessed. However, it is always the sole responsibility of the learner to act honestly and transparently in a way that is consistent with this policy and to seek advice and guidance if they are unclear.

6. Definitions

- 6.1. The Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIAHE) has been consulted for this policy and the School has adopted its definition of academic misconduct:
- "... is any action by a student which gives or has the potential to give an unfair advantage in an examination or assessment, or might help someone else to gain an unfair advantage, or any activity likely to undermine the integrity essential to scholarship and research"
- 6.2. Academic Integrity is defined by "a moral code or ethical code which includes values such as avoidance of cheating and plagiarism, as well as maintenance of academic standards, honesty and rigour in research, etc."
- 6.3. An act of academic misconduct is breach of academic integrity.

7. Breaches of academic integrity and Examples of Academic Misconduct

- 7.1. Academic misconduct, representing a breach of academic integrity, is not tolerated.



Allegations of academic misconduct will be investigated, and if confirmed, appropriate penalties will be applied.

7.2. Breaches in academic misconduct can be defined, but not limited, to the following:

- **Plagiarism:** Where an individual produces work, either with or without intention, which is partially or completely copied from another's work without application of the appropriate referencing system.
- **Self-plagiarism:** Also known as recycling and double-dipping, this is where a learner submits work or part of work which they have already submitted on an earlier occasion and for which they have gained credits.
- **Collusion:** Where the students have produced work with the aid of other student(s) of the same or different level to gain an unfair advantage.
- **Cheating:** Any activity where the student intentionally or unintentionally gives themselves an unfair advantage either in an exam or assessment.
- **Contract Cheating or commissioning:** Where a student commissions someone else to produce work for which they take full credit for.

7.3. A learner will be considered in breach of the Academic Integrity Policy if their actions are inconsistent with the definitions and examples provided in this document. However, a learner will not be deemed to have breached academic integrity or committed academic misconduct until an investigation is completed and confirms that misconduct has occurred. If a concern arises, the marking process will be suspended while the investigation is conducted.

7.4. Breaches of academic integrity may be either intentional or unintentional. Unintentional breaches can include actions such as accidentally bringing unauthorised materials into an exam room or inadvertently leaving a mobile phone on during an exam, without any intention to gain an unfair advantage. While a lack of intent will not be accepted as a defense, it will be considered when determining the appropriate penalty.

7.5. The school will also consider any declared disabilities, such as dyslexia or dyspraxia, and whether these may affect the learner's ability to maintain academic integrity, using existing guidelines for evaluating such cases.

7.6. Other general issues, such as illness during the assessment process, do not excuse academic misconduct, as learners are expected to use the appropriate procedures if they are unable to complete assessment requirements.

7.7. Academic misconduct can be identified at any point during a learner's studies, even after an award has been granted. If such misconduct is later confirmed and deemed to have provided an unfair advantage, it may result in the revocation of the award.

8. Categories of Academic Misconduct (AM)



- 8.1. Distinctions between minor and major academic misconduct will be based on a points tariff which will take into account: the level at which the academic misconduct occurred, intent to gain an advantage, the severity, type and nature of the misconduct committed, and any previous proven cases committed by the student.
- 8.2. There are four categories of academic misconduct:
- Poor academic practice
 - Minor academic misconduct
 - Major academic misconduct
 - Gross academic misconduct

9. Artificial Intelligence

- 9.1. Artificial Intelligence (AI) is an agile and fast developing platform, and our partner BNU created the guidance to ensure learners use AI appropriately within their studies. For more info, please consult the following link:

<https://www.bucks.ac.uk/current-students/registry-helpdesk-and-academic-advice/artificial-intelligence-guidance-students>

10. Procedure for Investigating Instances of Poor Academic Practice (PAP) and Academic Misconduct (AM)

- 10.1. Any suspicion of Poor academic Practice or Academic Misconduct should be notified to the corresponding Course Coordinator by the identifier, who will initiate investigation in a form proportionate to the nature of the allegation, except where the allegation concerns the Course Coordinator, in which case it will be handled by the Module Leader or Team Leader.
- 10.2. When informing the Course Coordinator, the identifier will evaluate the case and decide if it is a Poor Academic Practice (PAP) or alleged Academic Misconduct (AM). To do so, the BNU Academic Integrity Policy, Section 16 will be used as an example, which can be found here: [BNU Academic Integrity Policy](#).
- 10.3. Where a concern is identified, the identifier should arrange to meet with the learner for an initial discussion and to offer them a reasonable opportunity to respond to the concern.
- In the case of Poor Academic Practice: The Course Coordinator will notify the student within 3 days following the identification.
 - In case of alleged Academic Misconduct: The Course Coordinator will notify the student no later than the end of the next day after identification (the next day after the late submission deadline).



- 10.4. Allegations of academic misconduct will be treated with the strictest confidentiality.

11. Poor Academic Practice (PAP)

- 11.1. Poor Academic Practice (PAP) can occur at all levels. Poor academic practice is not limited to foundation year and Level 4. At Level 5 and Level 6, there can be only one PAP per academic year and this must be clearly justified, with all the necessary evidence. There cannot be PAP for the Dissertation/Project module.
- 11.2. When notifying the students in an email, students will be given an option to arrange a meeting with the identifier or Course Coordinator to present their case.
- 11.3. An Academic Misconduct form will be filled out for PAP and filed in the student's record system.
- 11.4. Where the case is considered to fall into the category of PAP, no penalty will be applied, the work will be marked, and developmental feedback will be provided.
- 11.5. The Course Coordinator will notify the Course Leader and Module Leader of the identified case of PAP by sending them the completed academic misconduct form, marked assessment and a *Turnitin* high-similarity report.

12. Academic Misconduct (AM) Preliminary Investigation

- 12.1. The alleged Academic Misconduct (AM) can be applied to students on any level of the program.
- 12.2. The investigation for AM should only start after the late submission deadline (10 working days after the original deadline). The Course Coordinator will contact the student no later than the end of the next day after identification, informing them of the suspected case of AM and invite the learner to an interview. The email should include any supporting evidence that may apply to the case. The interview date and time must be set within 5 working days from the date of the email. During this period, the assessment/coursework being investigated for AM will not be marked.
- 12.3. The interview may be held virtually or face-to-face. If the meeting is held face-to-face, this should be conducted in a private room where the student can speak openly. Cases of AM concerning more than one student, e.g., allegations of collusion between two students on the same level and course at the same time, separate interviews should be conducted for each student. Both the marker/identifier and student should be present at the meeting. In exceptional circumstances, the Course Coordinator may choose to be present. The student can invite a companion/counsel for support. Should the student be unable to attend the scheduled interview, and has notified the organiser of this in advance of the scheduled interview, the interview will be rearranged where possible to accommodate the students availability. Only one



rescheduling attempt will be permitted and this rescheduled interview must still take place within the 5 working days following the email. Should the student be unable to attend the rescheduled interview, or fails to declare their inability to attend prior to the scheduled interview, the interview will still proceed in the form of a meeting between the Course Coordinator and marker/identifier where a decision will be taken on how to progress the case in the student's absence.

- 12.4. All above procedures stated for investigating AM and PAP above, are carried out by LSST on behalf of BNU. All documents associated with the investigation and the assessment under AM investigation are then forwarded to BNU for the final outcome decision. All stages stated related to the outcome are carried out by BNU. If needed, please refer to BNU policy for further guidance or information: [BNU Academic Integrity Policy](#).

13. Penalties

- 13.1. The penalty for Academic Misconduct will be determined according to the seriousness of the offence and will take into account the stage of study. For example, cheating or plagiarism in the early stages of a course of study may be considered within the context of developing appropriate scholarly behavior, the same in later stages will normally attract automatic failure and/or expulsion. The student's previous record will also be taken into account.
- 13.2. Second and subsequent offenses will be considered Serious Misconduct, in absence of compelling mitigating evidence.
- 13.3. In the case where cheating or plagiarism has been established, a report will be made to the appropriate Examination Board/Progression Board.

14. Review and Other Procedures

- 14.1. A student may request a review of a decision of the Academic Misconduct Panel within 10 working days of receipt of the letter/email notifying them of the decision. The student may request a review of:
- The finding that an allegation is proved; and/or
 - The penalty imposed.
- 14.2. At the conclusion of the formal stage a learner may appeal the decision that academic misconduct has occurred and/or the penalty that has been applied by submitting an Academic Misconduct Appeal Form. The form should be submitted to conduct@bucks.ac.uk within 10 working days of the learner receiving notification of the outcome of the formal stage. Use of the form is intended to help learners to identify whether they have appropriate grounds to appeal and provide further



guidance on the process.

14.3. Appeals will only be accepted on the following grounds:

- That the procedures during the formal stage were not followed properly;
- That the decision-maker(s) reached an unreasonable decision;
- That the learner has new material evidence that they were unable, for valid reasons, to provide earlier in the process;
- That there is bias or reasonable perception of bias during the procedure;
- That the penalty imposed was disproportionate, or not permitted under the procedures.

14.4. On receipt of an appeal an initial assessment will be undertaken by Academic Registry at Buckinghamshire New University, to confirm that the appeal has been submitted within the permitted timescale and that appropriate grounds have been cited but will not otherwise make any decision. Otherwise, the appeal will be rejected.

14.5. Following the initial assessment, the appeal will be allocated to an appropriate BNU member of senior staff to review. The reviewer should not have been involved with the case at any previous stage. The outcome of the appeal review will be communicated to the learner in writing (e.g., by email), normally within 10 working days.

14.6. Where an issue is identified which is considered by the reviewer to have had a substantive impact on the original decision the appeal will be accepted. The case will be referred back to the BNU Panel for reconsideration at the formal stage with the reasons why the appeal was accepted and a recommended outcome where this is considered appropriate.

14.7. Where an appeal is rejected at either the initial assessment, or following the subsequent review of the appeal, the decision will be communicated to the learner in writing by BNU issuing a Completion of Procedures (CoP) letter outlining the reasons for the decision.

14.8. The CoP letter will also advise the learner of their right to further action through the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA), the timescales for doing so, and where and how they can access support.

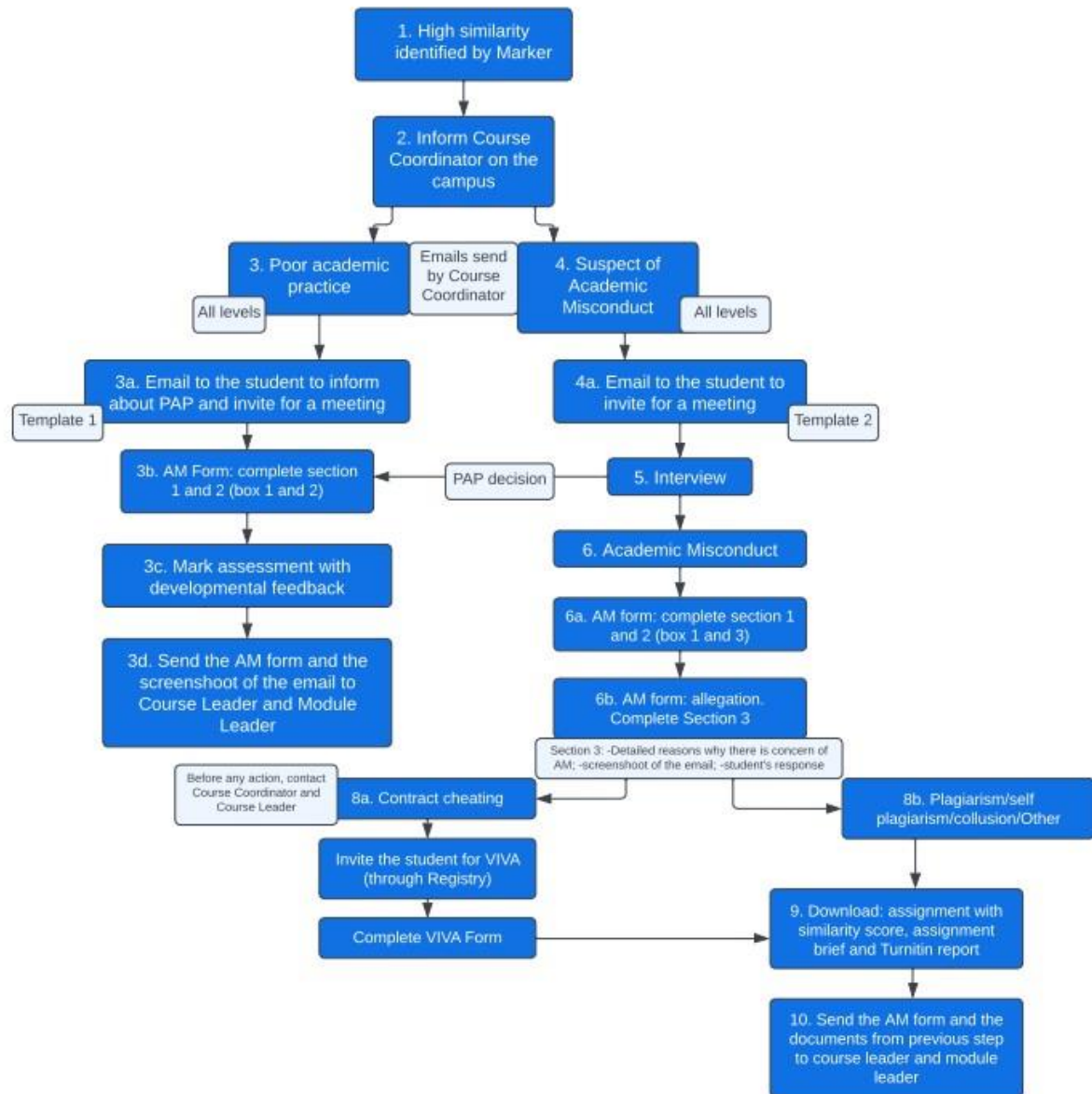
15. Independent External Review (OIA)

15.1. After the Buckinghamshire New University's internal procedures have been completed, a learner is entitled to ask the OIA, the independent ombuds service,



to review their complaint about the outcome of the University's academic misconduct process. The complaint needs to be submitted to the OIA within 12 months of the date of the Completion of Procedures letter.

16. Internal Procedures to Address Poor Academic Practice (PAP) and Academic Misconduct (AM) Cases - Flowchart





Appendix: Academic Integrity Statement

NB: As of March 2023, the QAA will no longer consent to be the Designated Quality Body in England (DQB). Nevertheless, the London School of Science and Technology regards these principles below as essential to our role as a leading provider of further and higher education.

A. QAA Academic Integrity Charter Principles

The Charter is made up of the 7 Principles of Academic Integrity:

1. Everyone is responsible as part of a 'whole community' approach
2. A 'whole community' approach
3. Working together as a sector
4. Engage with and empower students
5. Empower and engage with staff
6. Consistent and effective institutional policies and practices
7. Institutional autonomy

B. Mapping of Academic Integrity Principles to LSST's Policies

Everyone is responsible as part of a 'whole community' approach

LSST's policies and practices ensure commitment to upholding the QAA's Academic Integrity and it is all students' and staff members' responsibility across the School. LSST provides practical guidance on how to uphold academic integrity and good academic practice through the School's Academic Integrity Policy and its training sessions for academic staff.

A 'whole community' approach

LSST recognises that academic misconduct takes many forms although detection and penalties are important, they cannot provide the whole solution. The 'whole community' approach is taken into account in the educational and support processes provided by the School by limiting opportunities to commit academic misconduct, through deploying institution-wide detection methods, improving practice through case reporting and data collection and the School's clearly stated institutional values.

Working together as a sector

LSST recognises that academic misconduct is an issue that can affect the integrity of all higher education providers and have a severe impact upon the reputation of the entire UK sector. LSST is committed to working with its partner universities to share best practices and to work together on issues of mutual concern such as, sharing intelligence on essay or degree mills that are targeting their students or staff.

Engage with and empower students

The School is committed to supporting its students by providing them with as much knowledge as possible about academic integrity and the possible consequences of misconduct including the repercussions it can have on their future careers.

LSST has recently revised the School's Academic Integrity Policy to be more accessible and comprehensive. Other student resources include, but are not limited to:



- Harvard referencing workshops
- Student Union Support and Advice
- Careers and Employability Guidance

Academic integrity is communicated to students through classroom lectures, tutorials, School emails, social media posts and newsletters since it is of utmost priority to educate our students on academic integrity.

We are currently working towards recognising and supporting student academic integrity 'champions'.

Empower and engage with staff

The School recognises that lecturers and professional and academic staff play a critical role in deterring and identifying incidents of student academic misconduct. LSST communicates its academic misconduct policies and procedures to staff and has developed a framework that describes the processes that need to be followed when cases of misconduct have been identified. This includes staff training and development on tools and resources that detect breaches of academic misconduct and how best to educate students on the topic.

Methods, tools and resources our staff use to detect and deter breaches include but are not limited to:

- Change assessments regularly in each module, rather than just 'roll over' the same assessment types every year.
- Turnitin
- Formative feedback
- Referencing guidance
- Encouraging students to submit drafts
- Academic writing workshops

Consistent and effective institutional policies and practices

The School's Academic Integrity Policy provides both students and staff clear definitions, terms and processes that define academic integrity and maintain the policies and practices. The School's Academic Integrity policy clearly states the different types of academic misconduct breaches - minor or serious. The policy also includes how the School determines misconduct activity, the fair and clear investigative procedures and penalties, if found guilty. Our Academic Integrity Policy is subject to periodic review every year with the allowance for updates to be made as required by changes in law or operational practices.

Institutional autonomy

LSST acknowledges its responsibility in promoting and maintaining the quality and integrity of its institution. The School recognises that we are in the best position to provide our students with the tools and support they need to succeed in their independent learning and avoid academic misconduct. Mapping the School's Academic Integrity Policy against the QAA's Academic Integrity Charter will further enhance and showcase the good work we do.



Policies related to the Academic Integrity Policy:

1. Anti-Bribery Policy
2. Fitness to Study Policy
3. Library Regulations Policy
4. Personal Academic Tutoring Policy
5. Student Induction Policy
6. Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) Policy
7. Student Complaints Policy



Version History

Version	1.0 - 3.0
Original author(s):	Head of Assessments
Reviewed by:	Executive Committee
	January 2017 September 2017 September 2018
Version	3.1
Revised by:	Quality Audit Manager Head of Registry
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Approved by:	The Board of Governors
	October 2020
Version	3.2
Revised by:	Quality Manager Head of Registry
Revision summary:	<i>Annual review; partnerships amended. Document reformatted and version control added.</i>
Approved by:	The Board of Governors
	December 2021
Version	3.3
Revised by:	Quality Manager Head of Registry
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Approved by:	The Board of Governors
	September 2022
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Approved by:	The Board of Governors
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Revised by:	Quality Manager Head of Registry
Revision Summary:	<i>Annual review; Promoting Academic Integrity (Section 4.2, 4.3) updated to include details about Artificial Intelligence, Section 13 about Poor Academic Practice amended to meet BNU requirements. Flowchart amended. Version control applied.</i>
Approved by:	Board of Governors
	October 2023
Version	5
Revised by:	Quality Office



Assistant Registrar

Revision summary: *Annual review and update, principal changed to independent reviewer throughout policy, title change from 'Awarding Body - BNU' to 'BNU Registered Student', minor grammatical corrections, document format applied, version control applied.*

Approved by: The Board of Governors

October 2024
