



Academic Misconduct Procedure

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Students of ICST are expected to have academic integrity and to take responsibility for their own learning. Work that is not done by the student or work which does not credit other people's work adequately lacks academic integrity, even if there was no intention to deceive. Academic integrity is particularly important when the student will be applying their learning in the healthcare of others and ICST therefore take this matter seriously.
- 1.2. Students whose work shows poor academic practice will have their mark reduced and/or be required to undertake additional learning about academic integrity. Academic misconduct refers to an attempt to cheat in an assessment. This can take a number of different forms, including plagiarism, infringement of rules for examination candidates, arranging for another individual to do their academic work either casually or contractually, or attempting to assist another student to gain improper advantage (for example uploading essays to 'essay banks'). This list is not exhaustive. Academic misconduct will result in a reduction of marks for the work concerned or a more severe penalty.

2. Scope

- 2.1. The Academic Misconduct Procedure applies to every student enrolled and registered with the Institute of Clinical Science and Technology except where paragraph 2.2 below applies.
- 2.2. If the academic misconduct relates to work on a higher education validated award with a validating partner, the academic misconduct procedure of that validating partner will take precedent over the ICST procedure, except by mutual agreement with the validating partner on a course by course basis. If in any doubt as to which procedure applies to your course, you should consult your Student Handbook or the office of Student Services.
- 2.3. Where more than one student is involved in a case of suspected academic misconduct, the Institute may choose whether to take joint or separate action against them under this procedure.

3. Who is responsible for this procedure?

- 3.1. The Director of Student Services has responsibility for the procedure. All relevant members of staff have been made aware of the procedure and have received appropriate training.

4. Support for students

- 4.1. There is a variety of support available to students depending on the particular course taken. Your Student Handbook or the Student Services office will be able to direct you.
- 4.2. You may be invited to attend a formal panel meeting under this procedure, in which case you may be accompanied by a fellow student or Union representative. You are not permitted to be represented by a legally qualified solicitor or barrister. You must provide the name and contact details of your chosen companion to the Institute in good time before the meeting. The companion's role at the meeting will be to support you; you may consult him or her for advice and support during the meeting, but he or she may not answer questions on your behalf (unless this is agreed in advance by the chair as a reasonable adjustment for your disability).
- 4.3. The Institute will make reasonable adjustments to this procedure where it is reasonable to do so to prevent you from suffering substantial disadvantage as a result of your disability.

5. Time limits

- 5.1. The timescales set out in this procedure require you to engage with the academic misconduct process and meet all the Institute's stipulated deadlines for submission of your response/ evidence. It is your responsibility to ensure you keep to these timescales.
- 5.2. There may be cases where, for good reason(s), the Institute will need to extend the timeframe for dealing with your case. When this is the case, we will contact you to explain the delay and set a new deadline for the next stage.



6. Initial investigation of an alleged breach of academic integrity

- 6.1. All suspected cases of academic misconduct should be reported in writing to the Institute's Academic Integrity Officer. This officer may be a member of staff or faculty of the institute. This report must normally be submitted within 5 working days of discovery of the suspected misconduct.
- 6.2. Your work for which academic misconduct is suspected will normally be marked as if there is no concern about it, in accordance with the established marking criteria and timescale. In a case where the evidence consists of coursework which is prima facie identical, either wholly or substantively, to previously published work or to the work of another student, or where there is clear evidence of cheating in an examination, the Academic Integrity Officer may consider delaying the marking of the work.
- 6.3. Where the Academic Integrity Officer is involved in delivering the module concerned, the Director of Student Services will nominate an alternative Officer.
- 6.4. The Academic Integrity Officer will normally write to you to inform you of the allegation within 10 working days of being informed of the suspected academic misconduct. The letter will summarise the case and the evidence which supports the allegation. You must provide a written response for consideration within 10 working days of the date of the letter. If the alleged academic misconduct took place on a validated higher education award, you may request a formal hearing before an Academic Misconduct panel rather than have the matter dealt with by the Academic Integrity Officer.
- 6.5. Within 20 working days of the date of the letter to you, the Academic Integrity Officer will prepare a report on the incident taking into account all available evidence; this may include the written statement from the person reporting the incident and any response from you.

The Academic Integrity Officer will reach one of the following conclusions:

- No case to answer
- Poor academic practice
- Possible major academic misconduct.

If the report concludes that there is **no case to answer**, the Academic Integrity Officer will write to you to inform you of the outcome of the investigation.

- 6.6. If the report concludes that the incident is a result of **poor academic practice** the Academic Integrity Officer will determine a suitable reduction in the mark awarded, and advise you on participating in additional tutoring to increase your understanding and awareness of the significance of academic integrity and how to avoid a repeat incident.
- 6.7. If the Academic Integrity Officer determines that the incident is a result of minor academic misconduct, or that there is clear evidence of cheating in an examination, they will decide on an appropriate penalty. The Academic Integrity Officer will write to you informing you of the penalty and will also inform the Course Director and/or module team as appropriate of the need to advise you about suitable academic practice and the avoidance of any future similar allegation.
- 6.8. The penalty for a second or subsequent offence will normally be more severe than for a comparable offence.
- 6.9. If the report concludes that the incident is a result of possible major academic misconduct, you will be invited to a meeting of the Academic Misconduct Panel.

7. Academic Misconduct Panel meeting.

7.1. Academic Misconduct Panels are only used when:

- a) A student on a validated higher education award, who is not subject to the academic misconduct regulations of the ICST validating partner (para 2.2 above), elects to have the matter adjudicated by panel rather than the Academic Integrity Officer.
- b) The Academic Integrity officer has determined that the incident is a result of major academic misconduct.



- 7.2. In the event of either a) or b) above, the Academic Integrity Officer will pass all the paperwork available in the case to the Director of Student Services who will convene an Academic Misconduct Panel meeting.
- 7.3. You will be invited to attend the panel for interview, will receive a summary of the reasons for the cause for concern in your work, and will be invited to provide a response within 10 working days of the date of the letter.
- 7.4. At the panel meeting, you are given the opportunity to present evidence in person to establish the authenticity and/or originality of the work under investigation and how you came to produce it. The meeting will be recorded as an audio.
- 7.5. Where you fail to attend the panel meeting, it may proceed in your absence if the Chair is satisfied that you received proper notice of the date and time of the meeting and are absent without reasonable explanation. The Chair shall decide in his/her absolute discretion what constitutes "reasonable explanation".
- 7.6. Failure to respond or co-operate with the academic misconduct process is considered a disciplinary matter to be dealt with under the ICST members disciplinary procedure.
- 7.7. The Chair of the Panel will decide how the meeting will be conducted, ensuring that you are given a reasonable opportunity to present your case to the Panel. The Chair shall have the deciding vote if the panel does not reach consensus.
- 7.8. In the case of serious academic misconduct, and depending on the course, ICST reserves the right to notify your funding sponsor or your employer of the findings of any the academic misconduct panel, after the period for appeal has passed.

8. Penalties for academic misconduct

8.1. The penalties that can be imposed are:

- a) A formal written warning recorded on your academic record.
- b) Reducing the mark awarded but not lower than to a pass mark (i.e. not lower than 40% for an undergraduate module and 50% for a postgraduate module)
- c) Failure in the assessment with an opportunity for reassessment through an alternative assessment;
- d) Failure in the module involved with the possibility of retaking the module (or alternative) for a capped mark;
- e) failure in the module involved with the possibility of repeating the module (or alternative) for a capped mark in the next academic year;
- f) failure in all modules in the current semester or year, with the possibility of repeating the modules (or alternative) for a capped mark;
- g) Failure in all modules in the current semester or year, and forwarding your case to the Principal for consideration of withdrawal from studies.

8.2. Students who have already been subject to penalties (iii) to (vii) following findings of academic misconduct will have neither:

- i) the automatic right to referral in the same academic year; nor
- ii) the opportunity to repeat assessments uncapped in subsequent academic years.

9. Review

9.1. If you are dissatisfied with the decision of the Academic Integrity Officer or the Academic Misconduct Panel you have 10 working days to request a Review of that decision by completing an "Academic Misconduct Review Request Form. We will normally acknowledge your request within 5 working days of receiving it.

9.2. A request for a Review will be granted on limited grounds, namely:

- a) There was a procedural irregularity at the formal stage (e.g. there was a material failure by the Institute to follow the Academic Misconduct Procedure, clear reasons were not provided for the decision, or there is evidence of bias)



- b) The outcome was not reasonable in all the circumstances (i.e. no reasonable decision-maker, properly directing him/her/itself and taking into account the relevant facts, could have reached that decision)
 - c) New material evidence is available which you were unable, for valid reasons, to provide earlier in the process.
- 9.3. You should set out your concerns clearly and succinctly and provide evidence in support (where possible). You must explain how your request for a Review falls within one or more of the grounds set out above.
- 9.4. The Director of Student Services or his nominee will make a decision as to whether your request for a Review is based on the permitted grounds and hence eligible to be considered, and will notify you within 5 working days of receiving the request.
- 9.5. If the grounds are not satisfied you will be informed of the decision to reject your request for a Review and a Completion of Procedures letter ("COP") will be issued to you.
- 9.6. If one or more of the grounds for Review apply to your case, the Director of Student Services will appoint a suitable person with no previous involvement in the matter to review all information collated for the original decision, together with any new evidence presented, on the papers (but may contact you and/or anyone else involved in the matter if s/he considers it necessary).
- 9.7. The outcome of the Review will be that newly appointed nominee of the Director of Student Services either upholds the outcome made at the formal stage, or makes a different finding which overturns the outcome. The decision taken at the Review stage is final. The final decision of the Review will be communicated to you in writing, with reasons, usually within 28 working days from your Review request being accepted.
- 9.8. If the outcome of the Review is favourable to you, you can request the Institute to provide you with a COP letter within 30 days of the date of the outcome letter. Where such request is made, a COP letter will be provided within 14 days of the request. If the outcome of the Review is unfavourable to you, a COP letter will be sent to you automatically within 28 working days of the decision letter being issued.

10. Independent external review

- 10.1. For all higher education validated awards, if you are not satisfied with the outcome of this process, you may make a complaint to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education provided you have been issued with a COP letter. That letter will explain how you can submit a complaint and the deadline for doing so is 12 months from the date of the letter.

11. Use of data

- 11.1. The Institute will collect data on cases of academic misconduct at each stage of this procedure and any complaint submitted by you to any regulators and use the data: internally for reporting, evaluation, learning and training; and externally for discussion with regulators in the higher education sector.
- 11.2. The data used by the Institute for these purposes will be anonymised. Your personal data and sensitive personal data ('Personal Data') as defined by the Data Protection Act 1998 (the "DPA") may be disclosed to the Institute's members of staff and regulators only for the purpose of dealing with the allegation of academic misconduct, a complaint arising out of it and/or implementing any recommendations. Personal Data will not be shared with any other third parties unless the Institute has your express consent, has a statutory obligation to do so, or is otherwise permitted to do so under the DPA.

12. Withdrawal of awards

- 12.1. The Institute reserves the right to withdraw and/or amend an award if evidence of academic misconduct becomes available after the conferment of that award.