



Regent Ghana Academic Policy

Section C

Academic Misconduct

Procedures for Handling Academic Misconduct

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Note: This is an interim policy until January 2007. Policy implementation will be monitored throughout 2007 and reviewed in October/November.

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1. Definition

1.1 Cheating

Cheating is defined as any illegitimate behaviour designed to deceive those setting, administering and marking the assessment. Cheating in a University assessment is a very serious academic offence and is punishable by a range of sanctions, which may include an ultimate expulsion from the University. Cheating can take one of a number of forms, including:

1.1.1 The use of unauthorized books, notes, electronic aids or other materials in an examination;

1.1.2 Obtaining an examination paper ahead of its authorized release;

1.1.3 Collusion, i.e. the representation of another's work or ideas as one's own without appropriate acknowledgement or referencing, where the owner of the work knows of the situation and both work towards the deceit of a third party (while in plagiarism the owner of the work does not knowingly allow the use of his or her work);

1.1.4 Acting dishonestly in any way including fabrication of data, whether before, during or after an examination or other assessment so as to either obtain or offer to others an unfair advantage in that examination or assessment.

1.1.5 Tendering of information: Students may not give or sell their work to another person who plans to submit it as his or her own. This includes giving their work to another student to be copied, giving someone answers to exam questions during the exam, taking an exam and discussing its contents with students who will be taking the same exam, or giving or selling a term paper to another student.

1.1.6 Bribery: Offering money or any item or service to a faculty member or any other person to gain academic advantage for yourself or another is dishonest.

1.1.7 Impersonation or attempting to impersonate another candidate or being impersonated.

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affing” or looking over one’s shoulders in order to cheat.

1.1.9 Plagiarism, i.e. the act of fraudulently representing another’s work or ideas as one’s own without appropriate acknowledgement or referencing.

1.2 Types of Plagiarism

There are three main types of plagiarism, which could occur within all modes of assessment (including examination):

1.2.1 Direct copying of text from a book, article, fellow student's essay, handout, thesis, web page or other source without proper acknowledgement.

1.2.2 Claiming individual ideas derived from a book, article etc. as one's own, and incorporating them into one's work without acknowledging the source of these ideas.

1.2.3 Overly depending on the work of one or more others without proper Acknowledgement of the source, by constructing an essay, project etc. by Extracting large sections of text from another source, and merely linking these

Together with after few months when I went back to work David came to apologise to me and said he wanted to say the truth but he was scared that he will be sacked, so I told him God is my judge. A few of one own sentences

1.3 Schools may wish to extend these definitions for specific subject areas and provide students with examples as appropriate. The correct referencing system for making quotations explicit and acknowledging sources should be available through personal tutors or supervisors, specific tutorial sessions in Schools, and Schools' student and research handbooks.)

1.3.1 Methods for detecting plagiarism

(i) The University reserves the right to use all means at its disposal to detect plagiarism where it arises. All submitted work will be liable to scrutiny in order to identify any plagiarized elements.

(ii) Where a School uses plagiarism detection software, it will advise the students concerned in advance as to how this process will be undertaken and to the particular submission requirements (if any) involved.

1.3.2 Determining whether plagiarism has taken place

(i) Where a member of staff considers that a student's work contains plagiarized material, they will first determine the level of seriousness. A number of factors will be taken into account in this initial assessment, including:

(ii) the proportion of the assignment affected;

(iii) the academic level;

(iv) any previous recorded instance of plagiarism.

2. Procedures for Dealing with Suspected Dishonesty

2.1 These procedures apply to all undergraduate and postgraduate students.

2.2 In cases where evidence of suspected cheating/plagiarism is found, the Academic Misconduct Officer and the Dean of the School teaching that module (or, in the case of postgraduate research students the Academic Misconduct Officer and the Dean of the School to which the student belongs) shall deal with the matter internally in the first instance.

2.3 If the Academic Misconduct Officer believes that there is a *prima facie* case of suspected cheating/plagiarism, the student will be advised in writing (normally within 12 working days of the case being reported to the Academic Misconduct Officer) of the nature of the suspected offence. In this letter the Academic Misconduct Officer will indicate which of the following two procedures will apply:

2.3.1 A formal meeting with the student will be convened and chaired by the Academic Misconduct Officer to discuss the case; or

2.3.2 The case will be referred directly to the Academic Secretary.

2.4 In all cases the Director of Administration & Academic Secretary shall receive a copy of the Academic Misconduct Officer's letter.

2.5 In those cases in which a meeting with the student is convened and chaired by the Academic Misconduct Officer or convener, such a meeting will include at least one other member of staff of the School and the Faculty Officer or representative acting as secretary to the meeting (attention should be given to gender balance). The student shall

be entitled to attend for the duration of the meeting, and may be accompanied by a person who should normally be a member of the University. This person may be a staff member, a member of the Students' Union, or another student. The purpose of this person is to assist the student during the course of the meeting.

2.6 Should the Academic Misconduct Officer conclude, on the basis of the meeting, that a penalty is required, the penalty applicable in cases relating for assessment for undergraduate and postgraduate taught modules shall be either:

2.6.1 lowering of the module or assessment mark (not below 40%) with student awareness as appropriate. In such a case, the student should be made aware of both the original and the capped mark; or

2.6.2 resubmission of the assessment with module or assessment mark capped at 40% as appropriate.

2.7 In exceptional cases, students may be required to submit a new piece of assessment without prejudice to the mark attainable.

2.8 In cases relating to formative work, the Dean's warning system may also be employed as appropriate, in addition to any sanction a School may normally apply to non-submission of formative work.

2.9 The Academic Misconduct Officer may also refer the case to the Academic Secretary, if none of the above sanctions appears appropriate.

2.10 If it is determined that an offence has taken place, the student shall be informed in writing (normally within five working days) of the decision and the penalty to be imposed as soon as practicable. All decisions will require formal ratification by the Dean of the relevant School.

2.11 The Academic Secretary shall receive a copy of the letter for the student file.

2.12 For instances of suspected cheating/plagiarism for postgraduate research students where suspected cheating/plagiarism is discovered at the pre-submission stage, the Academic Misconduct Officer and the Dean of School shall deal with the matter internally in the first instance. In those cases in which a meeting with the student is convened, the maximum penalty shall normally be a requirement to re-draft the relevant section(s) of the thesis to the satisfaction of the supervisor and the Dean of School. Cases where minor redrafting would be inappropriate in view of the *prima facie* case found by the Academic Misconduct Officer should be referred to the Academic Secretary.

2.13 For instances of suspected cheating/plagiarism for postgraduate research students where suspected cheating/plagiarism is discovered by the examiner(s) at the post-submission stage, the examiner(s) shall prepare a jointly-signed report to be sent without delay to the Academic Misconduct Officer and the Dean of School, who shall deal with

the matter internally in the first instance. In those cases in which a meeting with the student is convened, the maximum penalty shall normally be a requirement to re-draft the relevant section(s) of the thesis to the satisfaction of the supervisor, the examiners and the Academic Misconduct Officer. Cases where minor redrafting would be inappropriate in view of the *prima facie* case found by the Academic Misconduct Officer should be referred to the Academic Secretary. The Board of Examiners should not meet, or prepare a final report, until the Chair of the Board is notified of the outcome of the case.

2.14 The student shall have the right of appeal against any decision taken. The appeal, which must be received by the Academic Secretary's office within 12 working days of the student receiving the Academic Misconduct Officer's letter, shall be heard by the Dean of the appropriate School. (Where the Dean is a member of the School concerned a Dean from another school shall hear the appeal.). If the Dean and the Academic Secretary consider that a case may be a valid appeal, a Senate Appeal Committee shall be convened. There shall be no right of appeal against the decision of the Dean in such cases.

3. Procedures for Committees of Academic Enquiry

3.1 In cases of suspected cheating discovered during formal exam hall conditions, the Deputy Registrar & Academic Secretary shall (having received the report from the Principal Invigilator as set out in Annex A) without delay inform the student in writing that they have been reported for suspected cheating. The Deputy Registrar & Academic Secretary shall copy the Principal Invigilator's report to the Dean of the School teaching the module.

3.2 In cases of suspected cheating referred to the Academic Secretary after consideration at School level, the Dean of the School teaching the module shall without delay submit a report, counter-signed by the marker of the assessment (where different) to the Academic Secretary, at the same time informing the student that he/she is being reported for suspected cheating/plagiarism. In cases of plagiarism the report shall clearly indicate (by cross-referencing) what sections of text have been plagiarized, and from what source; in other instances of cheating clear evidence supporting the case must be provided. For postgraduate research students, the report by the Academic Misconduct Officer should include a jointly-signed report prepared by the examiners.

3.3 In the case of taught programmed, where a meeting of a Board of Examiners is imminent, the Academic Misconduct Officer shall ensure that the Chair of the Board receives a copy of the report to the Academic Secretary. The Board of Examiners shall consider the examinee's programmed assessment profile purely on the marks available to it. Once the Board of Examiners has reached its decision the Chair shall then inform the Board of the receipt of a report regarding suspected cheating/plagiarism for that candidate. The Board of Examiners shall not include on any class or pass list the name of any candidate in respect of whom it has received such a report until the Chair of the Board is notified of the outcome of the case by the Academic Secretary. In the case of cheating relating to research programmed, the Board of Examiners should not meet, or

prepare a final report, until the Chair of the Board of Examiners is notified of the outcome of the case by Academic Secretary.

3.4 The Academic Secretary shall normally convene a (non-standing) Committee of Academic Enquiry to meet as soon as possible following receipt of the Academic Misconduct Officer's report. The Committee shall hear and decide upon the case (with Senate's delegated authority). The Committee's membership shall consist of the Dean of the appropriate School as Chair, the Vice-President (Academic Affairs) and a member of Senate (none of whom may be members of the School concerned).

3.5 Exceptionally (in cases where the scale of offence does not warrant a Committee hearing), on receiving a report from the Academic Misconduct Officer and/or Principal Invigilator, the Academic Secretary may, in consultation with the Dean of the appropriate School, direct the Academic Misconduct Officer to deal with the suspected case as set out in section 4 of these procedures.

3.6 The Academic Secretary shall inform the student in writing of the Committee's meeting, to which he/she is invited to attend. Not less than five working days ahead of that meeting, the Academic Secretary shall supply the student with a copy of the report from the Academic Secretary/Principal Invigilator, along with any other supporting evidence and a copy of these procedures. The student shall be entitled to attend the Committee meeting for the duration of the hearing and may be accompanied by a person who should normally be a member of the University (with any variation to this principle at the discretion of the Chair of the Board). The purpose of this person is to assist the student during the course of the meeting. With the permission of the Chair, s/he may take a role in the cross-examination of any witnesses on behalf of the student and may make summative remarks following the student's concluding statement. The student may indicate at the start of the hearing whether the accompanying person was expected to take an active role in the proceeding. The student may direct questions to the Academic Misconduct Officer or convener (and any witnesses called) directly in an appropriate manner.

3.7 The student may make a written statement to the Committee and may also call witnesses of his/her own, the details of which must be provided to the Academic Secretary not later than one day ahead of the Committee's meeting.

3.8 Should a student decide not to exercise his or her right of attendance, the hearing may proceed in the student's absence. Should the student subsequently, normally within 12 working days, present mitigating circumstances explaining the absence to the Chair's satisfaction, a Committee consisting of members not previously involved may be convened.

3.9 The Academic Misconduct Officer or convener submitting the report shall be invited to attend for the duration of the meeting and present the case to the Committee, and shall have the right to call other witnesses to appear before the Committee. The Academic Secretary shall be notified of these witnesses not later than one day ahead of the Board

meeting. The Academic Misconduct Officer or convener may also call the student as a witness and may then direct questions to the student directly in an appropriate manner at the Chair's discretion. A student may refuse to give evidence without detrimental effect.

3.10 The Committee shall require the student and the Academic Misconduct Officer or convener concerned, to withdraw while it reaches its decision. However, a student may, at the Chair's discretion, be given the opportunity to address the panel in the absence of the Academic Misconduct Officer or convener. The panel may recall the Academic Misconduct Officer following the student's statement, should the need arise.

3.11 If the Committee determines that an offence has taken place, it shall inform the student, the Dean of School (and the Chair of the Board of Examiners where different) in writing of its decision and the penalty to be imposed. The penalties open to the Committee shall include expulsion from the University.

4. Appeals

4.1 Student must receive a written statement within 5 working days. The student shall have the right of appeal against the decision of the Committee of Academic Enquiry. The appeal, which must be received by the Academic Secretary within 12 working days of the student receiving a letter regarding the outcome of the hearing, shall be heard by a Senate Appeal Committee. This Committee would have the power to confirm, to set aside or to vary the penalty imposed by the Committee of Academic Enquiry. There shall be no internal right of appeal against the decision of the Appeal Committee.

4.2 A Senate Appeal Committee shall comprise three members (including a student representative) of the Senate, which shall appoint the Chair from among that number. No person shall be entitled to be a member of the Appeal Committee who is also associated with the appellant's School and/or programme of study or who has previously been involved in the appeal.

4.3 The appellant shall be informed of the date of the meeting of the Appeal Committee not less than 12 working days in advance. He/she may choose to appear before the Committee but the Committee may also hear a case, by mutual agreement, in the absence of the appellant. The student may be accompanied by a member of the University or partner institution (and whose name must be notified to the secretary of the Committee in advance of the meeting). Proxies for appellants shall not normally be allowed.

4.4 The Appeal Committee shall call the Academic Misconduct Officer or academic unit (or appropriate representative) and shall be empowered to call other members of the University or partner institution.

4.5 The Appeal Committee, having considered the evidence, may uphold or reject the appeal, such a decision being final.

4.6 The Appeal Committee shall minute its deliberations and decisions and submit a report to the Senate. If the Committee's report includes a recommendation requiring action before the next meeting of the Senate, it shall be for the President to authorize action and then report to the Senate retrospectively.

4.7 The Secretary of the Committee shall notify the appellant in writing of the Committee's decision, giving the reasons for it.

4.8 If an appeal is upheld by the Appeal Committee, the appellant has the right to make representations to the Vice-President (Academic Affairs) for the reimbursement of reasonable and proportionate incidental expenses incurred by the appeal.

4.9 There are no other University appeal procedures beyond those stages detailed above. If in the opinion of a student an appeal remains unresolved after the exhaustion of the appropriate processes, application may be made to the Visitor.

5. Guidelines to Markers and Invigilators

5.1 Where there is clear evidence of an attempt to cheat during a formal examination, the Principal Invigilator in that examination hall shall, having consulted all other Invigilators present, warn the candidate of their conduct, but allow the candidate to complete the examination, confiscating any unauthorized materials immediately. At the end of the examination the Principal Invigilator will inform the student that a report will be submitted to the Academic Secretary's office directly thereafter.

5.1.1 The Principal Invigilator's Report to Academic Secretary shall be countersigned by the other Invigilators present.

5.1.2 On receipt of the Principal Invigilator's report and the accompanying evidence, the Academic Secretary, having consulted all Invigilators present and the Academic Misconduct as necessary, shall decide whether the case warrants invoking the procedures for handling cases of suspected cheating (section 5). In cases where such a process is not deemed necessary, the student shall be warned as appropriate Academic Secretary (normally within ten working days of the suspected offence) concerning their conduct.

5.1.3 If it becomes apparent after an examination has finished (for instance when the work is being marked) that a student may have cheated during that examination, then the same procedures are to be followed. In such cases the report shall be submitted by the Dean of the School teaching the module concerned to the Academic Secretary.

5.1 Where a marker suspects that a student's submission contains evidence of cheating/plagiarism, he/she should consult the Dean of the School responsible for the teaching of the module concerned before any further action is taken.

ANNEX A

Procedures for dealing with Cheating/Plagiarism at School Level – Flowchart

Relevant item in procedures	Description	Comments
2.1	Discovery of alleged case of plagiarism/collusion/cheating	
	↓	
2.2 -2.4	<p>Report to DoS, and AmO (all cases to be reported).</p> <p>Suspected offences outside School remit and repeat offenders may be referred to Academic Secretary/Dean directly (Procedures for Committees of Academic Enquiry)</p>	
	↓	
2.4 -2.6	<p>Formal Meeting at School level, to be arranged as soon as practicable</p> <p>Student to receive report prior to hearing (a copy of the report is to be forwarded to the Academic Secretary)</p> <p>Student may submit written statement</p>	<p>Membership: DoS, and AmO other member of School. Faculty Officer to act as Secretary.</p> <p>Entitled to attend: student; person accompanying student.</p>
2.6-2.7	→	<p>Tariff of penalty:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resubmission of a new piece of assessment without mark capping • Lowering of assessment or module mark down to a mark of 40% only (student should be aware of original mark and lowered mark) • Resubmission with mark capping (40%) of assessment or module mark as appropriate • For research students: redrafting of relevant sections of the thesis required
2.9	→	<p>Academic Secretary/Dean for consideration for Committee of Academic Enquiry possible at this stage if School regards this as appropriate</p>

	↓	
2.10-2.11	Student to receive written statement within 5 working days. Report to be forwarded to Academic Secretary/Dean for ratification Report to Board of Examiners.	<i>Report to go on student file</i>
2.14	→	Student has the right to appeal to the Academic Secretary/Dean (see Appeal Procedures) within 12 working days after receiving written statement regarding outcome of meeting

Investigation into case at School level may in the first instance include an informal meeting with the student

ANNEX B

Procedures for Committees of Academic Enquiry – Flowchart

Relevant item in procedures	Description	Comments
1.1 -1.3	Discovery of alleged plagiarism/cheating	
2	→	See separate procedures for dealing with plagiarism at School level
	↓	
2.1-2.2	Report by AmO to Academic Secretary/Dean regarding alleged plagiarism/cheating	Report should be submitted without delay after discovery of alleged plagiarism/cheating, prior to Board of Examiners agreeing on final mark.
	↓	
2.3	Academic Secretary/Dean decide to convene (non-standing) Committee of Academic Enquiry	Membership: Dean (chair), Provost, member of Senate (External Examiners not eligible to sit on panel)
	↓	
2.4-2.12	Student to receive report by Dean of School concerning alleged plagiarism. Student is invited to attend hearing	No less than 5 days ahead of hearing
	→	<p>In case of non-attendance of student:</p> <p>(a) Hearing to proceed in student's absence. Person normally accompanying student may be present. Should student present mitigating circumstances, normally within 12 working days of meeting, explaining the absence to the Chair's satisfaction, a new panel consisting of members not previously involved may be convened;</p> <p>(b) Student's right to appeal not affected.</p>
	↓	
3.1	Committee of Academic Enquiry: The meeting will commence with an internal discussion within the panel to clarify matters of process	Panel to clarify procedure, i.e. seating arrangements, specific needs, line of investigation etc

	↓	
3.2-3.3	Student/accompanying person as well as AmO/convener are called before the Board.	Student to indicate whether accompanying person will merely lend support or take an active role in proceedings
	↓	
3.4	AmO or convener invited to present the case to the panel.	
	↓	
3.5-3.6	Student invited to present a statement.	
	↓	
3.6	Panel hears witnesses, i.e. student, AmO or convener, any other witnesses called by School or student (Panel to be notified of any witnesses the student may wish to call prior to hearing).	
	→	AmO/convener may call student as witness and address questions at student directly in appropriate manner (Chair's discretion). Student is entitled to refuse to give evidence without detrimental effect.
	→	Student/representative may address questions at AmO/convener directly in appropriate manner (Chair's discretion).
	→	Panel members may follow up on different lines of enquiry, and may address student, AmO/convener or any witnesses directly in appropriate manner.
	→	During lengthy hearings, breaks may be provided at the Chair's discretion.
	AmO or convener invited to make closing statement.	
	↓	
3.7-3.10	Student/representative given opportunity to address panel in absence of AmO or convener. Should student decide to do so, AmO or convener to withdraw from hearing. May be recalled if panel felt that student disclosure raised issues that needed to be addressed before panel. Student invited to give a closing	

	statement. Student to withdraw from hearing.	
	↓	
3.11	Panel deliberates and comes to a conclusion.	
	↓	
4.1	Secretary to Committee of Academic Enquiry to inform student in writing of outcome of hearing. AmO or convener to receive a copy of letter to student. Report to Senate.	As soon as possible after hearing
	↓	
4.1	Student has the right to appeal within 12 working days after receipt of report regarding outcome of hearing.	
4.1	→	Appeal Committee of Senate Membership: Three Senate members, to elect Chair between them

Student may choose not to exercise the right to attend for good reason. A student should not suffer any penalty for such a decision.

AmO: refers to Academic Misconduct Officer

DoS: refers to Dean of School