

Academic Conduct Breaches (previously 'Definitions of Cheating')

Introduction

All assessments are intended to fairly test the skills, abilities, understanding and knowledge of each of the individual students undertaking the assessment. Academic misconduct – or cheating - is defined as conduct (whether successful or not) aimed at deceiving the University into acknowledging a false level of attainment by a student. Academic conduct breaches, including assisting someone else to cheat, will be subject to investigation, in accordance with the University's [Academic Conduct](#) procedure, which may result in disciplinary action.

The University takes academic integrity very seriously, and has signed up to the [Academic Integrity Charter for UK Higher Education](#) to indicate its commitment to protecting the standards and reputation of UK degree awards. Oxford Brookes is also committed to ensuring that students are provided with education and guidance on academic conduct, to ensure you can demonstrate good practice in your academic work and assessments – this is delivered through your programme of study, and also through courses and advice offered by the [Centre for Academic Development](#) and the [Library](#)

Oxford Brookes expects high standards of academic conduct from our students, and any form of academic misconduct is strictly forbidden under the University regulations. In order to assist understanding of what is meant by academic conduct breach, and help you avoid breaching the regulations, some examples of the types of conduct which would be considered as a breach of the regulations are described in the sections below.

Students have been expelled, or had their degrees withheld, for cheating in assessments. It is therefore important that, if you are having difficulties with your work, you should seek help from your lecturers and the University support services available, rather than be tempted to use unfair means to gain marks. *Please do not risk losing your degree and undermining all the work you have done towards it!*

Types of academic conduct breaches

1. **Submitting other people's work as your own, either with or without their knowledge.**

This includes: copying in examinations; using notes or unauthorised materials in examinations; submitting work you have paid for as your own. It also includes impersonation, i.e. taking an assessment on behalf of, or pretending to be, another student; or allowing another person to take an assessment on your behalf or pretend to be you.

2. ***Plagiarism, or taking or using the words, ideas or work of others, and presenting them as your own.***

To avoid plagiarism, you must make sure that quotations from any source are clearly identified and attributed, at the point where they occur in the text of your work by using one of the standard conventions for referencing. The Library publishes guidance about how to reference your work correctly and your tutor can also help you. It is not enough just to list sources in a bibliography at the end of your essay or dissertation if you do not acknowledge the actual quotations in the text. Neither is it acceptable to change some of the words or the order of sentences if, by failing to acknowledge the source properly, you give the impression that it is your own work.

3. ***Collusion***

except where written instructions specify that work for assessment may be produced jointly and submitted as the work of more than one student, you must not collude (or collaborate) with others to produce a piece of work jointly, copy or share another student's work, or lend your work to another student when it is likely that some or all of it will be copied.

4. ***Duplication***

this is submitting work for assessment that is the same as, or broadly similar to, work submitted earlier that has been awarded academic credit, i.e. attempting to gain credit more than once for the same piece of work. This may, for example, involve submitting the same complete coursework assignment for two different modules, but there is no minimum acceptable level of duplication.

5. ***Falsification***

this may include the invention of data, copying or altering data from any other source, or otherwise obtaining it by unfair means; or inventing quotations or references.

6. ***Use of custom writing services***

this includes the use of any service which produces custom materials by students requesting, sharing or producing work. It also includes the use of online exam assistance for cheating in assessment. The University may consider any request placed with any form of custom writing service to be a breach of the academic conduct regulations, whatever use is then made of the material produced. This extends to include any request for any piece of work (either formative or summative assessment or work which is not linked to any form of assessment or credit-bearing element of your programme) including, but not limited to, essays and dissertations (including outlines and guides), reports, exam notes, proposals, posters, presentations, the editing or improvement of existing work, statistical services, and computing services including programme and code development.

7. ***Assisting others to cheat***

The University considers assisting others to cheat (including attempting to assist someone else to cheat) as a form of academic misconduct, for which the individual student providing the assistance is culpable.

8. ***Unethical practice***

failure to obtain appropriate ethics approval to carry out research, e.g. with human participants, in accordance with Departmental, Faculty and University procedures.

Approved as regulation A3.13 'Definitions of cheating' by Academic Board in July 2012

Last updated:

July 2018 (amendment to section 2.iv on duplication)

March 2021 (amendments to sections 2.ii on plagiarism and 2.vi on custom writing services)

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