A Tutorial on Plagiarism and Collusion

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Additional material used from:
Monach University, UH LIS,
UH UPRs(http://sitem.herts.ac.uk/secreg/upr/)
This tutorial is to help you understand what the University means by the terms **Academic Offences**

- Cheating
- Plagiarism
- Collusion

05 mins  Overview
points you, as the tutor, may wish to make to the students:
- the best way to avoid plagiarism is to understand what is acceptable practice and what isn’t
- this tutorial is to bring out questions you may have about assessment
- lecturers want to help students learn and are not out to ‘catch’ them
Assessments and Examinations – Regulations for Candidates

(Including Requests for the Review of Examination Decisions (Appeals Procedure) (non- UK Partner Organisations)

Version 01.0 Appendix I, UPR AS13

(formerly Appendix I, UPR AS/C/6.2)
What do you understand by the term Cheating?
Cheating

An attempt to gain, or to gain, an unfair, improper or dishonest advantage in the assessment process including, for example:

- Impersonation
- obtaining or attempting to obtain access to examination papers
- the copying of, or attempting to copy, the work of another candidate without his knowledge
- the introduction into an examination room unauthorized material
- the falsification of data,
- false statements made in order to receive special considerations by the BOE
- Etc...

(UPR UPR AS13 (Appendix I)

Appendix I, UPR AS121 and Appendix I, UPR AS132, define cheating plagiarism, collusion and other academic misconduct as follows:

‘2.1.1 ‘cheating’:

to attempt to gain an unfair, improper or dishonest advantage in the assessment process;

to gain an unfair, improper or dishonest advantage in the assessment process;

where on the balance of probability it could reasonably be construed that a candidate intended to gain an unfair, improper or dishonest advantage in the assessment process, including:

a impersonation - either where a student allows any another person to take an assessment on their behalf or to present themselves as being that student or where a current University of Hertfordshire student takes an assessment on behalf of another University of Hertfordshire student;

b obtaining or attempting to obtain unauthorised access to examination papers;

c the copying of, or attempting to copy, the work of another candidate in the examination or other in class assessment, whether by overlooking what he or she has written or is writing or by asking him or her for information in whatever form;

d the introduction into an examination room (or any other room in which a formal assessment is taking place) of aids including books, notes, personal notes or revision notes in any form, papers, stationery, computer disks or other devices of any kind other than those permitted in the rubric of the examination paper, with the intention of using such item or, in fact, using such item. This includes, for example, unauthorised information stored in the memory of a pocket calculator, in a mobile telephone, personal organiser or any other device;

e requesting a temporary absence from an examination room (or any other room in which a formal assessment is taking place) with the intention of gaining, or attempting to gain access to information that may be relevant to a formal assessment;

f the falsification of data, as defined in section 2.1.4; the duplication of assessments as defined in section 2.1.4 and any other form of academic misconduct as defined in section 2.1.4;

g false statements made in order to receive special considerations by the Board of Examiners or to obtain extensions to deadlines or exemption from work;

h assisting or attempting to assist another University of Hertfordshire student to gain or attempt to gain an unfair, improper, or dishonest advantage in the assessment process;

i through the purchase or theft of material;
What do you understand by the term Plagiarism?
What is plagiarism?

Evidence of the representation by an individual, whether intentionally or otherwise, of another person’s work as their own or use of another person’s work without acknowledgement including:

– Importing of phrases from another work without using quotation marks and identifying the source;
– Making a copy of all or part of another’s work and presenting it as your own work by failing to disclose the source;
– Summarising or paraphrasing another's work merely by changing a few words or by altering the order in which the material is presented;
– The use of ideas of another person without acknowledgement of the source;

(UPR UPR AS13 (Appendix I))

2.1.2 ‘plagiarism’:

evidence of the representation by an individual, whether intentionally or otherwise, of another person’s work as their own or use of another person’s work without acknowledgement including:

a the importing of phrases from another person’s work without using quotation marks and identifying the source;
b making a copy of all or part of another person’s work and presenting it as the student’s own work by failure to disclose the source;
c without acknowledgement of the source, making extensive use of another person’s work, either by summarising or paraphrasing the work merely by changing a few words or by altering the order in which the material is presented;
d the use of the ideas of another person without acknowledgement of the source or the presentation of work which substantially comprises the ideas of another person and which represents these as being the ideas of the candidate;
What is plagiarism? (cnt)

• Acknowledgement means writing exactly the source and referencing to it
• Only small portions are allowed (ex. Definitions), placed in quotes and italics like: “other persons work” and properly referenced
• Do not use other’s code if it is to be assessed
• Be careful on machine generated code
• Do not use other’s pictures or drawings
• Etc…

(UPR UPR AS13 (Appendix I))

2.1.2 ‘plagiarism’:

evidence of the representation by an individual, whether intentionally or otherwise, of another person’s work as their own or use of another person’s work without acknowledgement including:
a the importing of phrases from another person’s work without using quotation marks and identifying the source;
b making a copy of all or part of another person’s work and presenting it as the student’s own work by failure to disclose the source;
c without acknowledgement of the source, making extensive use of another person’s work, either by summarising or paraphrasing the work merely by changing a few words or by altering the order in which the material is presented;
d the use of the ideas of another person without acknowledgement of the source or the presentation of work which substantially comprises the ideas of another person and which represents these as being the ideas of the candidate,
What do you understand by the term Collusion?
What is collusion?

- evidence of the representation by an individual of work which he or she has undertaken jointly with another person as having been undertaken independently of that person;

- In other words: doing an one person assignment like if it was a group one.

2.1.3 ‘collusion’:

evidence of the representation by an individual of work which he or she has undertaken jointly with another person as having been undertaken independently of that person;

‘the representation by an individual of work which he or she has undertaken jointly with another person as having been undertaken independently of that person’ (UPR AS/C/5)

When work is being undertaken in your own time (independently), it is normally acceptable to discuss, in general terms, the issues raised by a particular piece of coursework. However, structuring, sharing notes or actually writing up an answer using the same words as another student(s), will amount to collusion. (UPR AS/C/5)
2.1.3 ‘collusion’:
evidence of the representation by an individual of work which he or she has
undertaken jointly with another person as having been undertaken independently of
that person;

You Should Work Together

You Should Discuss with your fellow students

BUT draw carefully the line between Academic Cooperation and Collusion
Other academic misconduct

• evidence that a student has failed to comply with the University’s assessment and examination regulations, other than those relating to cheating, plagiarism and collusion including:
  – the falsification of data
  – the duplication of assessed work
  – assisting another to commit academic offence
  – the removal of an answer book or examination stationery
  – failure to comply with the instructions of an invigilator
  – breach of professional confidentiality

2.1.4 ‘other academic misconduct’:
evidence that a student failed to comply with the University’s assessment and examination regulations, other than those relating to cheating, plagiarism and collusion including:
a the falsification of data including the creation of false written materials or statistical data or its alteration, for example, by the invention of the statistics presented or the invention of quotations or references;
b the duplication of assessed work – the submission of broadly similar work completed by the student for academic credit as part of the same programme without express acknowledgement of the previous submission;
c permitting or assisting another to present work that has been copied or paraphrased from a student’s own work without attribution or as if it were the work of the other;
d the removal of an examination script or examination stationery or other materials from the examination room (or any other room in which a formal assessment is taking place);
e failure to comply with the instructions of an invigilator;
f the introduction into the examination room of any personal notes or revision notes in any form or stationery;
g breach of professional confidentiality.”
What happens in a case of an Academic Offence

Allegations of cheating, plagiarism, collusion and other academic offences will be investigated in accordance with the procedures set out in Appendix III, UPR AS14.

Should such allegations be proven, the University reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to impose any of the academic penalties set out in Appendix III, UPR AS14.

3 MATTERS DEALT WITH THROUGH THE STUDENT DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

3.1 Alleged offences which necessarily involve making decisions that go beyond purely academic judgement will be dealt with in accordance with the provision of UPR SA04: The University regards the following as matters of discipline:

i plagiarism, as defined in section 2 of this document;

ii cheating, as defined in section 2 of this document;

iii collusion, as defined in section 2 of this document, where one or more of the parties contests the allegation (section 4.2.1, refers);

iv academic misconduct offences, as defined in section 2 of this document, where a Faculty Academic Conduct Officer determines that a matter would be more appropriately dealt with under the provisions of the student disciplinary procedures (UPR SA04:).

4 MATTERS DEALT WITH BY FACULTY ACADEMIC CONDUCT OFFICERS

4.1 The following matters will be dealt with in accordance with the procedure set out in section 5 of this document unless section 4.2.3 applies:

i plagiarism, as defined in section 2 of this document, not referred by the Faculty Academic Conduct Officer to the student disciplinary process (sections 3.1, iv, and 4.2.3, refer);

ii collusion, as defined in section 2 of this document, where the allegation is not contested (section 4.2.1, refers);

iii academic misconduct offences, as defined in section 2 of this document, not referred by the Faculty Academic Conduct Officer to the student disciplinary process (sections 3.1, iv, and 4.2.3, refer).

4.2 Inter-relationships with the disciplinary process

4.2.1 Collusion

i Where an allegation of collusion has been made and one or more of the parties contests it, the matter will be dealt with through the student disciplinary procedure for the specific purpose of determining who has committed the offence.

ii Where the disciplinary process identifies an offender, the matter will then be referred to the appropriate Faculty Academic Conduct Officer who, within the provisions of these regulations, will determine how the offence is to be dealt with (sections 5.4 and 5.5 refer).

4.2.2 Where a disciplinary investigation reveals evidence of an academic offence

Where the investigation of a matter through the student disciplinary process (UPR SA04:) reveals evidence that suggests that an academic offence of the type normally dealt with by a Faculty Academic Conduct Officer may have occurred, the Presiding Officer will refer the evidence to the appropriate Faculty Academic Conduct Officer who will exercise his or her judgement and, within the provisions of these regulations, determine how the offence is to be dealt with (sections 5.4 and 5.5 refer).

4.2.3 Where the evidence presented to a Faculty Academic Conduct Officer suggests that a disciplinary offence may have occurred

i A Faculty Academic Conduct Officer may determine that, on the basis of the evidence available, a matter would be more appropriately dealt with under the provisions of the student disciplinary procedures (UPR SA04:) and in such cases will refer the matter for further action (section 5.3, i, refers).

ii Where, for whatever reason, a matter dealt with through the student disciplinary procedure is proven, in addition to any non-academic sanctions or penalties that may be imposed under the provisions of UPR SA043, the Module Board of Examiners may, where cheating, plagiarism, collusion or other academic misconduct (as defined in section 2 of this document) has
FACULTY ACADEMIC CONDUCT OFFICER’s (FACO’s) ACTIONS

• Where the evidence presented to a Faculty Academic Conduct Officer suggests that a disciplinary offence may have occurred
  – determine whether the allegation is such that it is a matter of Student Discipline and where this is the case refer it to the appropriate Officer for further action.
  – Where a Faculty Academic Conduct Officer considers that the matter is solely one of academic judgement, he or she will consider the allegation and any supporting documentation seeking advice from whomsoever he or she deems appropriate, and

5 PROCEDURE

5.1 Faculty Academic Conduct Officers will be appointed in each Faculty.

5.2 Allegations of plagiarism, collusion and academic misconduct will be made in writing to the appropriate Faculty Academic Conduct Officer and will be accompanied by appropriate documentary evidence to support the allegation.

5.3 (NOTE A: Some cases, such as alleged cheating in an examination, may be referred to the Programme Tutor. The Programme Tutor is required to comply with these regulations and the timescales incorporated within them.)

Faculty Academic Conduct Officers will, within five (5) working days of the date on which the allegation was referred to them, or as soon as possible thereafter:

I determine whether the allegation is such that it is a matter of Student Discipline and where this is the case refer it to the appropriate Officer for further action.

ii Where a Faculty Academic Conduct Officer considers that the matter is solely one of academic judgement, he or she will consider the allegation and any supporting documentation seeking advice from whomsoever he or she deems appropriate and
FACO’s ACTIONS cnt.

– inform the student in writing by means of a Letter of Notification.
  • the student has a right to present his or her case to the Faculty Academic Conduct Officer either in person or in writing within ten (10) working days of the date of the Letter of Notification (not the date of its receipt by the student);

– exercise their judgement and determine whether, on the basis of the evidence, an offence has been committed and will deal with the matter.

ii inform the student in writing by means of a Letter of Notification:
  a of the alleged offence and the underlying facts that support the allegation;
  b that where these facts suggest that an offence may have occurred, the student has a right to present his or her case to the Faculty Academic Conduct Officer either in person or in writing within ten (10) working days of the date of the Letter of Notification (not the date of its receipt by the student);
  (the Faculty Registrar (or nominee) will make a written record of any meeting between the Faculty Academic Conduct Officer and the student);

iii exercise their judgement and determine whether, on the basis of the evidence, an offence has been committed and will deal with the matter, as appropriate, in accordance with section 5.4 and/or 5.5.
FACO’s ACTIONS cnt.

– inform the student, by means of a Letter of Decision:
  • of their decision and what will happen next;
  • of the student’s right to appeal in writing to the Dean of Faculty;
  • of the penalty that the Module Board of Examiners is likely to impose.

iv inform the student, by means of a Letter of Decision:
  a of their decision and what will happen next;
  b of the student’s right to appeal in writing to the Dean of Faculty;
  c of the penalty that the Module Board of Examiners is likely to impose.
  d Included with the Letter of Decision will be:

  1 a copy of the report submitted to the Chairperson of the Module Board of Examiners in fulfilment of regulation 5.5.1, ii, b, (but without the recommendation to the Board) and
  2 a copy of the appeals procedure set out in section 6 of this document.
  v Only the Faculty Academic Conduct Officer may notify the student of the outcome.
First offences

• Where the allegation is proven and
  – the offence is a first offence and
  – the student admits the offence in writing,

• The FACO, considering the severity of the offence, can propose penalties that can be:
  – From simple warning, to
  – Failing the F1 for the module

5.4 First offences
5.4.1 Where the allegation is proven and
i  the offence is a first offence and
ii  the student admits the offence in writing,
the Faculty Academic Conduct Officer may decide as follows:
  a  the work will be marked on its academic merits, taking account of any plagiarism and/or collusion and
  b  to issue a formal warning to the student which will be placed on the student’s file and
  c  where he or she judges that a first offence is sufficiently serious in nature, the Faculty Academic Conduct Officer will direct that the offence is treated in the same way as a second or subsequent offence (section 5.5, refers).
First offences cnt.

• The Faculty Academic Conduct Officer may decide
  – the work will be marked on its academic merits, taking account of any plagiarism and/or collusion and
  – to issue a formal warning to the student which will be placed on the student’s file and
  – where he or she judges that a first offence is sufficiently serious in nature, the Faculty Academic Conduct Officer will direct that the offence is treated in the same way as a second or subsequent offence (section 5.5, refers).
Second or subsequent offences

- Where a **serious first offence or a second or a subsequent offence** is proven:
  - A similar process is followed
  - **BUT**
    - Penalties proposed are more severe, usually F1 for the module, or even F2 or F3
    - If the second or a subsequent offence occurs on the same Academic Year, ALL previous offences will have the same penalty with the most recent one.

5.5 Second or subsequent offences

5.5.1 Where a serious first offence or a second or a subsequent offence is proven:

i. a note will be placed on the student’s file;

ii. the Faculty Academic Conduct Officer will:

a. refer the matter to the Chairperson of the relevant Module Board of Examiners so that a penalty may be imposed;

b. provide the Module Board of Examiners, via the Chairperson of the Board, with a written report which will include:

1. a summary of the evidence in relation to the case, and reasons for the decision;

2. specific confirmation that the student has or has not responded to the Letter of Notification;

3. the record of any meeting between the Faculty Academic Conduct Officer and the student;

4. any written statement made by the student;

5. the number of previous proven offences (if any).
Penalties

- Depending on the severity of the proven academic misconduct e.g. First offence, second or subsequent offence; The BoE may impose one or more of the following penalties.
  - Work is marked on its academic merits, taking account of any plagiarism/collusion.
  - Student receives formal warning which is placed on the student’s file.
  - An award of 0 for the assessment in which plagiarism/collusion occurred.
  - An award of F1, F2 or F3 for the module in which plagiarism/collusion occurred.

5.5 Second or subsequent offences
5.5.1 Where a serious first offence or a second or a subsequent offence is proven:

i a note will be placed on the student’s file;

ii the Faculty Academic Conduct Officer will:

a refer the matter to the Chairperson of the relevant Module Board of Examiners so that a penalty may be imposed;

b provide the Module Board of Examiners, via the Chairperson of the Board, with a written report which will include:

1 a summary of the evidence in relation to the case, and reasons for the decision;

2 specific confirmation that the student has or has not responded to the Letter of Notification;

3 the record of any meeting between the Faculty Academic Conduct Officer and the student;

4 any written statement made by the student;

5 the number of previous proven offences (if any).
A student may appeal to the Dean of Faculty against the decision of a FACO solely on one of more of the following grounds:

– there has been a material administrative error or procedural irregularity
– there was unfairness or impropriety on the part of the FACO
– that there is new information, relevant to the case, which has not already been considered

Appeals must be made in writing to the Dean of Faculty within five (5) working days of the date on the Letter of Decision.
Most students don’t hand in work that could be suspected of plagiarism or collusion.

That is the rule
However … few do

- All students respect their work, as well other's work
- A student can accidentally involved
  – That’s why he must recognize what constitutes an offence
- A student can be desperate, and as a resort decides to cheat
  – That’s why he must not let time pass

Reassure students, that they are not suspects of cheating.
They must know the rules so they can recognize plagiarism or collusion.
They must not drift away and finally have to cheat in order to submit a work
Why a lecturer might suspect plagiarism or collusion? …

– A student never takes part, and suddenly produces a work not up to his (known) level
– A very trivial work, that it can be found on many places
– The work looks if is written by more than one person
– A plagiarism-collusion program, finds to high possibility of offences – for ex. EVE, Turnitin, etc

The intension is not to condemn students but to educate them
Collusion and Plagiarism is against education.
Example of a plagiarism detection software screenshot

Screen grab shows copy of Turnitin Report that lecturer receives when files put into Turnitin for checking. Highlight to students that this was a Master’s student – indicates “75%” potentially plagiarised.

Sources matched numbered and % match indicated, leading to next slide which shows detailed matching of written text.
Why might students do an assignment together when it is individually assessed (collusion)?

- misunderstanding of the difference between discussing the work together and collusion
  - talk to your fellow students about the work but do not exchange copies of the work
  - use your own words in assignments
  - study well written code and to re-use it

- However,
  - assessments are to help students learn the basics and to test their ability to write code.

Advice to students:
- talk to your fellow students about the work but do not exchange paper or soft copies of the work
- use your own words in assignments

Discuss the particular difficulties that can arise in programming. One of the ways to learn programming techniques is to study well written code and to re-use it.

However, assessments are to help students learn the basics and to test their ability to write code.
Why might students plagiarise?

• misunderstanding of how to acknowledge another person’s work
  – We use Harvant’s University System

• fear that their writing skills are not adequate
  – Neither are mine. I keep trying and improving
  – there are no marks to be gained from copying out large chunks of text-books etc.

Why might students plagiarise?

• misunderstanding of how to acknowledge another person’s work
  there will be a handout directing students to web-sites that give help

• fear that their writing skills are not adequate
  there are no marks to be gained from copying out large chunks of text-books etc.
Other reasons why students cheat:

We point out the word ‘cheat’. In the previous discussion we looked at reasons students may unintentionally plagiarise or collude because of misunderstanding about the correct way to do things. The following reasons are because the student is trying to get an unfair advantage.

- **can’t do the assignment**
  - keep up to date
  - read through lecture notes/textbook
  - see your lecturer,
  - attend lectures and tutorials

### did not start the assignment early enough

There is research which shows that students who leave work to the last minute are more likely to plagiarise or collude:

- don’t work to last minute deadlines

- **to save time and effort**

  Poor strategy on the student’s part, success in the examination will depend on understanding the work

- **to get good marks**

  Family pressures?
Other reasons why students cheat: (2)

CHEAT: unfair advantage

- didn’t start the assignment early enough
  - don’t work to last minute deadlines

- to save time and effort
  - success in the examination will depend on understanding the work

- to get good marks
  - Your aim is to learn

Other reasons why students cheat:

We point out the word ‘cheat’. In the previous discussion we looked at reasons students may unintentionally plagiarise or collude because of misunderstanding about the correct way to do things. The following reasons are because the student is trying to get an unfair advantage.

- can’t do the assignment
  - advice to students
    - keep up to date
    - read through lecture notes/text book
    - use help desk
    - try emailing a lecturer for an appointment, but you should have attended lectures and tutorials

- didn’t start the assignment early enough
  - there is research which shows that students who leave work to the last minute are more likely to plagiarise or collude
    - don’t work to last minute deadlines

- to save time and effort
  - poor strategy on the student’s part, success in the examination will depend on understanding the work

- to get good marks
  - The aim is to learn, not to catch up marks.
  - Family pressures?
Summary

• you are at University to acquire subject knowledge and skills and not just to pass the assessments
• students want to be assessed fairly; no-one should have an unfair advantage
• instances of cheating (plagiarism and collusion) are rare but are always dealt with if detected
• learn how to reference other people’s work correctly
• don’t work too closely with friends on assignments
• see your personal tutor if you are getting behind with the work
Thank you

• Do not Forget
• By cheating on your work you cheat yourself, not any other