Annex 8: Deterring Academic Misconduct

# Introduction

1. The University adheres to the six fundamental values of academic integrity; honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility, and courage[[1]](#footnote-1).
2. Staff can help to inform and educate students on how to avoid breaches of academic integrity by setting clear expectations, supporting students’ understanding of academic integrity, and signposting relevant information and resources.
3. There is no single method of assessment design that will prevent academic misconduct. Employing a variety of methods will reduce the likelihood of students failing to adhere to the standards of academic integrity expected by the University of Kent.

# Principles of Good Practice

1. Staff should ensure that students have a clear understanding of what constitutes academic misconduct.
   1. Explain what academic misconduct is, and how to avoid it.
   2. Ensure that students are aware of the Universities policy on Academic Misconduct ([**Annex 10**](https://www.kent.ac.uk/education/documents/credit-framework/credit-framework-annex-10.docx) of the **Credit Framework for Taught Courses**) and the procedures that are followed to investigate and penalise a case when a piece of work is referred for breaching academic integrity standards.
   3. Embed the Moodle module **Understanding and Avoiding Academic Misconduct** into course delivery, and ensure that students complete this annually.
   4. Clearly outline course and module expectations regarding authorized and unauthorized use of materials.
   5. Provide opportunities at a modular level for students to ask questions about University expectations and policy on Academic Integrity.
   6. Provide opportunities for students to offer feedback or suggestions for future assessment design. This can be facilitated through committees at a Divisional/Course level, such as Student Voice Forums.
   7. Direct students to the Student Learning and Advisory Service website for additional study support and guidance.
2. Learner Agreements
   1. Student learner agreements, also known as honour codes, should clearly outline the expectations of academic integrity, the consequences for academic misconduct, and the steps that will be taken to embed the principles and values of academic integrity into the course content and assessment.
   2. Include in in-person exam booklets or online exams a statement that clearly outlines what the student can and can’t do, and the behaviours that will be considered as academic misconduct.
   3. For assessment involving group work, provide students with guidance that clearly outlines the activities and behaviours of academic integrity that are expected by the University. This should explicitly deter the sharing, duplication or copying of answers in online spaces (i.e. Microsoft Teams, WhatsApp, etc), explaining clearly that this is considered a form of collusion.
3. All teaching materials, whether used online or in face-to-face teaching, should include consistent references in the correct referencing style(s) for the subject area.
4. Use tools such as Turnitin to identify instances of academic misconduct.

# Assessment Design

3.1. Staff should ensure that modules include different types of assessment, avoiding single instrument assessment where possible. See Annex 1 of this regulatory framework and Annex A Appendix A of the Code of Practice for Taught Courses of Study for further information and guidance on the requirements for modules.

* 1. Consider breaking big exam components into smaller assessments or mini tests.
  2. Use multiple choice questions in tests and Moodle quizzes.
  3. Consider the benefits of comparative timeframes for completing online exams. A shorter timeframe can reduce opportunities for academic misconduct. In addition to in-person exams, the University currently adheres to two forms of online examination, either twenty-four hour or examination within a restricted timeframe. Online exams utilize Moodle and Turnitin as a mechanism for delivery and submission.[[2]](#footnote-2)

3.2 To reduce collusion, staff should consider including open questions or group briefs where multiple solutions can be reached with justification.

3.3 Avoid recycling the same assessment or assignment questions within a three year period, as students may have unauthorized access to past essays or exam papers submitted within that timeframe. This can also reduce opportunities for contract cheating, or for past papers to be downloaded from Essay Mill websites.

3.4. Where the digital capability is available (i.e. on Moodle) staff should consider designing assessments with varied question sequences, or where only one question is displayed at any given time.

3.5. Focus on authentic assessment design that measures a student’s ability to apply knowledge and skills in practical, real-life situations. Examples of authentic assessment include; project work, portfolios, performance, digital or creative content design, debates, and oral presentations. See Annex 5 of the Assessment and Regulatory Framework for further information on authentic assessment.

3.6. Where embedding Artificial Intelligence tools into your teaching and learning experience, state clearly where students are allowed to engage with open AI software such as ChatGPT as part of their assessment. Where such use is not explicitly stated by the module convenor and is detected after submission of an assignment or exam paper, it will be considered as a type of academic misconduct.

1. Fundamental Values of Academic Integrity defined by the [International Centre for Academic Integrity](https://academicintegrity.org/about/values) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. See information about online exams on [E-learning Community page](https://livekentac.sharepoint.com/sites/education-elearning/SitePages/Online-exams.aspx) on SharePoint (available to Kent staff only) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)