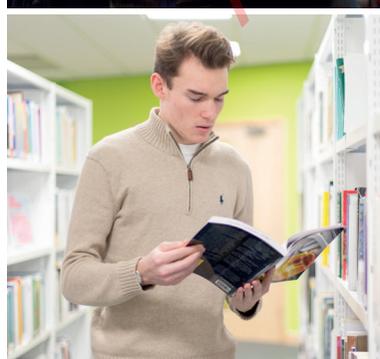


Academic Integrity at the University of Chester



It takes hard work, dedication and determination to achieve a degree from the University of Chester.

Because of this, the University works hard to ensure that your efforts are properly recognised. We make sure that employers and the public can have confidence that the qualification you are working towards is of the highest quality, and accurately reflects the knowledge and skills you have gained during your time at the University.



Students also have a vital role to play in safeguarding the value of the University's awards by acting honestly, respectfully and fairly when they're being assessed: in other words, by upholding academic integrity. To support this, the University has introduced a new Academic Integrity Policy and a copy is included with this letter. The central message of the policy is that students should do nothing that has the potential to give them an unfair advantage over their class mates when being assessed.

The Academic Integrity Policy sets out the key principles which underpin the University's approach. By adhering to these you will be helping to ensure that the awards the University makes continue to be recognised for their high quality and that our graduates remain highly sought after in the jobs market. By acting honestly when completing assessments, you will ensure that the award you leave with is a true reflection of your ability and the efforts you have made during your studies. By adhering to the principles of academic integrity, you are showing respect towards yourself, your fellow students and everyone who graduates from the University of Chester. By undertaking your assessments fairly, you're playing your part in protecting the value of the University's qualifications by ensuring that all students have an equal chance to succeed.

The University will always protect your interests by ensuring that any student found to have breached academic integrity doesn't benefit from doing so. But we will always act fairly and proportionately. We undertake to provide support and guidance to help students maintain academic integrity and where students act in good faith, the University will give them opportunities to develop good academic practice before penalising them.

If you have any questions about the University's Academic Integrity Policy or if you want to learn more about what it means for you, ask your PAT for help. Alternatively, you can email academicintegrity@chester.ac.uk for more information.

Academic Integrity at the University of Chester



The University of Chester values its students' contribution to the necessary quality of its academic standards and awards by adhering to the principles of academic integrity and fair play in assessment.

These standards are upheld when students, completing work for assessment, act honestly and take responsibility for the fair presentation of the contents of any work they produce for assessment. This means that students will do nothing that has the potential for them to gain an unfair advantage in assessment.

1. Maintaining Academic Integrity

1.1. In order to adhere to the University's definition of academic integrity, students are expected to abide by the following conventions when completing work for assessment:

1.1.1. Acknowledge all sources of information, knowledge and ideas used when completing work for assessment by consistently and correctly using an acceptable referencing system.

1.1.2. Produce work that is the product of their own, individual efforts. An exception to this is where an assignment brief specifically requires a single piece of work to be submitted on behalf of a group of students.

1.1.3. Declare when they have used work before in a previous assessment (whether successful or not) using an acceptable referencing system.

1.1.4. Present accurate information and data that has been obtained appropriately and which is a fair representation of their own endeavours, knowledge and understanding.

1.1.5. Adhere to and comply with all applicable regulatory, legal and professional obligations and ethical requirements therein.

1.2. The University will make information on how to maintain academic integrity available to students in ways that are appropriate and accessible. However, at all times, it is the sole responsibility of the student to act in a way that is consistent with the Academic Integrity Policy and to seek advice and guidance if they are unclear.

2. Breaches of Academic Integrity

2.1. A student will be regarded as being in breach of the Academic Integrity Policy if they act or behave in a manner that is inconsistent with the University's general definition of academic integrity or the specific statements given in 1.1.

2.2. A breach of the Academic Integrity Policy may occur when a student knowingly acts in a way that is contrary to the policy or does so inadvertently by means of careless scholarship. Inexperience, intention, lack of intention or unfamiliarity with the Academic Integrity Policy will not be regarded as a defence in the event that the policy is breached.

2.3. Any breach of the Academic Integrity Policy will be categorised as either unacceptable academic practice or academic misconduct. These are dealt with in different ways according to the procedure described in Handbook F, Section 6 of the Quality and Standards Manual.

2.4. Examples of unacceptable academic practice:

2.4.1. Plagiarism: the use of ideas, intellectual property or work of others without acknowledgement or, where relevant, permission.

2.4.2. Reuse of previously submitted material: the use of work, without appropriate referencing, that has been submitted for



assessment, whether successful or not, by the same student in this University or any other institution. This will not apply where a student is making a resubmission for the same assessment component in the same module, unless specifically prohibited in the assessment information.

2.4.3. Collusion: the unauthorised collaboration between two or more students resulting in the submission of work that is unreasonably similar, but which is submitted as being the product of the submitting student's individual efforts.

2.5. Examples of academic misconduct include:

2.5.1. Commissioning: engaging another person or organisation to complete or undertake an assessment, whether a financial transaction has taken place or not.

2.5.2. Falsification: the presentation of fictitious or distorted documents, data, evidence or any other material, including submitting the work of another person as if it is their own. This includes the submission of false evidence in an application to the Mitigating Circumstances Board or to the Academic Appeals Board.

2.5.3. Research misconduct: failure to obtain ethical approval for a research project or failure to comply with regulatory, legal and professional obligations for research projects.

2.5.4. Cheating: any action before, during or after an assessment or examination which has the potential for the student to gain an unfair advantage in assessment or assists another student to do so. This includes failure to adhere to the examination regulations.

2.6. These lists are not exhaustive and the Academic Integrity Policy might be breached in ways not specifically referred to here.

2.7. The University will take steps to detect potential breaches of the Academic Integrity Policy which might not be immediately apparent when work is marked anonymously. Following completion of the marking process, once marks have been de-anonymised, the Chair of the Module Assessment Board might authorise a viva voce. The purpose of this will be to confirm the authenticity of the work that has been submitted.

2.8. Suspected breaches of the Academic Integrity Policy will be initially investigated by the relevant Chair of the Module Assessment Board in accordance with the procedure described in Handbook F, Section 6 of the Quality and Standards Manual.

2.9. Except in the case of unacceptable academic practice by students studying at Level 3 or Level 4, a breach of the Academic Integrity Policy can only be confirmed by the Academic Integrity Review Panel or its subgroup.

Academic Integrity at the University of Chester

ARCHIVED COPY
DO NOT USE

To support students to develop good academic practice, the University has created a Moodle module on Academic Integrity. It can be found by going to

<https://portal1.chester.ac.uk/aqs/Pages/aqss-academic-integrity.aspx> and following the link to **Guidance and Good Practice**.

If you have any questions about the University's Academic Integrity Policy or if you want to learn more about what it means for you, ask your PAT for help. Alternatively, you can email academicintegrity@chester.ac.uk for more information.

University Academic Integrity Review Panel

Guidance for Students (20/21)

Your department has made an allegation that a piece of work you have submitted for assessment is in breach of the Academic Integrity Policy. As a result, the matter has now been referred to the University Academic Integrity Review Panel for consideration.

This guidance is intended to briefly explain what happens during the Panel hearing and what the possible outcomes are. However, for full details of the process, you should refer to the Academic Integrity Policy and the associated procedure available on Portal (go to <https://portal1.chester.ac.uk/aqs/Pages/aqss-academic-integrity.aspx>).

Attending the Panel hearing

You will receive a letter to your University of Chester email account, inviting you to a Panel hearing. The invitation will be sent to you at least 7 days before the hearing and will include the date, time and location of the hearing. You should respond to that letter by the deadline provided and tell us if you would like to attend. You may present your case to the Panel either in writing or in person and you have the right to be accompanied to the hearing if you wish. The letter provides further details on who is permitted to accompany you to the hearing.

Panel hearings are currently taking place via Microsoft Teams ONLY. Full guidance on how to install and use Microsoft Teams will be attached to your Panel invitation separately. It is important that you read this guidance carefully and you must inform us beforehand if you wish to attend the meeting via Microsoft Teams. If you have any queries, you should contact academicintegrity@chester.ac.uk.

If you do not attend, the Panel are not allowed to draw any conclusions from your absence and they must come to a decision based only on the information they receive from your department. If you feel that there are circumstances preventing your attendance, please refer to the '*Request to Defer a Hearing*' guidance on Portal which provides details on the options available if you cannot attend or wish to defer the hearing.

During the Panel

The Panel will consist of three members of academic staff, one of whom will be a senior member of staff who will Chair the meeting. There will be a Student Affairs Officer present who is not a member of the Panel, but who advises the Panel on the regulations and takes the minutes. Lastly, a member of staff from your department will normally be in attendance to explain the case to the Panel.

The hearing will normally be audio recorded and at the start of the meeting, the Student Affairs Officer will read out your student number so that the case can be identified on the recording. The Chair will introduce the members of the Panel and all other people who are in attendance.

The Chair will normally ask the representative from your department to outline the case and explain what steps the department takes to support students in avoiding breaches of the Academic Integrity Policy. You will then be asked if you want to make any remarks of your own. The Panel might then want to ask you some questions about the work that has been presented.

The Panel understands that attending this type of meeting is stressful. The purpose of the Panel's questions are not to catch you out or to make you feel bad, but rather to enable them to understand what has happened in order to arrive at an outcome that is proper and fair. If

there is anything that is said at the hearing that you don't understand or that you would like clarification of, please let the Chair know during the hearing.

The hearing is an opportunity for you for you to do the following:

1. If you disagree with the allegation that you have breached the Academic Integrity Policy, to explain why you think that is.
2. If you agree that there is evidence that your work has breached the Academic Integrity Policy, to explain what you have learned from the case to avoid a reoccurrence in future. You might also want to explain how you think it occurred in the first place.

The Panel cannot take into account whether or not you intended to breach the Academic Integrity Policy. However, the Panel might consider what you say and assess whether or not any extenuating circumstances can be taken into consideration when deciding an appropriate penalty.

After the hearing

At the end of the hearing, the Panel will meet in private to decide what the outcome will be. The outcome will be sent to you in writing (to your University of Chester email account) within 10 working days.

Outcomes

The detail here is a guide only and the Panel has full discretion in the decisions that it makes. The possible decisions are given in the procedure which accompanies the Academic Integrity Policy, available on Portal. The Panel's decision may be in one or two parts, so it is important that you read all parts of the outcome letter carefully once received.

Decision(s) on each allegation

The Panel must decide whether or not your work is in breach of the Academic Integrity Policy in each of the pieces of work presented to it.

If your work is found **not to be in breach** of the Academic Integrity Policy or if there is insufficient evidence, no penalty will be applied and the mark for that piece of work must be released in the normal way.

If the Panel finds that there is evidence to show that your work **does** breach the Academic Integrity Policy, it must impose a penalty, regardless of whether you knowingly or inadvertently breached the Academic Integrity Policy.

Penalties

The penalties that can be imposed by the Panel vary in severity based on a number of factors. These include, but are not limited to, the nature of the allegation, your response to the allegation, including any steps you might have taken to improve your academic practice, your level of study and any previous breaches of the Academic Integrity Policy.

The least severe of these penalties would be for you to receive a mark for the piece of work, discounting the parts that are found to be in breach of the Academic Integrity Policy. The most severe would be for your studies at the University to be terminated.

The Panel will have regard to the Procedure, which helps them to determine a penalty that is fair and consistent. You can access this Procedure at any time on Portal (go to <https://portal1.chester.ac.uk/aqs/Pages/aqss-academic-integrity.aspx>).

Academic Integrity Procedures

Guidance for Students

Your department has made an allegation that a piece of work you have submitted for assessment is in breach of the Academic Integrity Policy. **The University takes breaches of the Academic Integrity Policy very seriously and you should now try to engage with us positively to resolve the matter.**

This guide briefly explains what happens now and what the possible outcomes might be. However, for the full detail of the process, you should take a moment to read the Academic Integrity Policy and the associated procedure available on Portal (go to <https://portal1.chester.ac.uk/aqs/Pages/aqss-academic-integrity.aspx>).

Stage 1: Allegation

You will have received a letter from your department inviting you to a meeting to discuss the work that has been submitted. Along with the letter, you will have received a form which gives details of the allegation and a copy of all of the evidence that the department has considered when deciding to make that allegation. **You must read all of the information carefully.** If you do not understand anything, you should ask the department to clarify.

Stage 2: Meeting with the Department

The meeting is part of an investigation that the department must carry out to decide if the allegation should go further. It gives the department an opportunity to explain the allegation to you and for you to say anything that you feel is relevant. You might also want to make a written response to the allegation that can be discussed during the meeting. You have the right to be accompanied to the meeting by a friend (as long as they are also a member of the University). The Students' Union can also give you advice if you need it and you may want to speak to them after the meeting, before you make a formal response to the allegation.

Stage 3: Outcome of the Department Investigation

At the end of the meeting, the department representative will decide, based on the evidence available and your response, whether there is a case to answer for a breach of the Academic Integrity Policy. If they decide that there is sufficient evidence, the department representative will make a recommendation about how they believe your work breaches the policy. Possible breaches of the policy are categorised in one of two ways:

Unacceptable academic practice	Academic misconduct
Includes (but is not limited to): Plagiarism Reuse of previously submitted material Collusion	Includes (but is not limited to): Commissioning Falsification Research misconduct Dishonesty/cheating

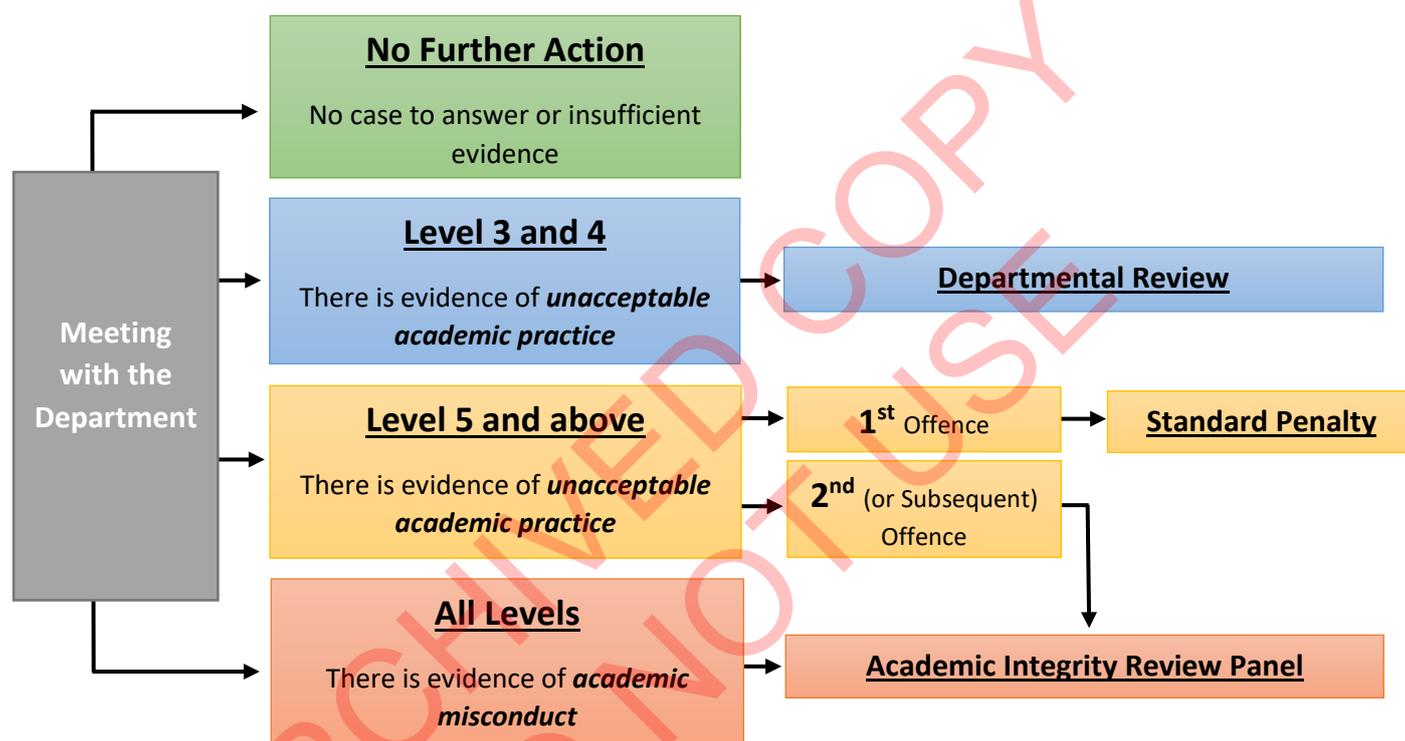
You will have the opportunity to state whether you accept the outcome of the department's investigation, disagree with the findings or if you want more time to think about your decision. The decision you make at this point helps to determine what the next steps will be.

If you do not attend the meeting with the department, or if you want more time to think about whether or not to accept the department's finding, you will have 7 days following the date of the meeting in which to do this. If you fail to respond, it might be assumed that you are accepting the finding and any subsequent penalty.

Next Steps

If the department representative decides that there is no case to answer, the matter will end. No further action will be taken and you will be given a provisional mark in the normal way. However, if the department decides that there is a case to answer, what happens next depends on your level of study, the type of breach of the Academic Integrity Policy that has been alleged (either unacceptable academic practice or academic misconduct), your response to the department's investigation and whether you have been found to have breached the Academic Integrity Policy in the past.

The diagram below shows the possible outcomes following your meeting with the department. Which of these outcomes will apply in your case will depend on a number of factors which are explained later in this guidance.



Departmental Review (Level 3 or 4 only)

If the department decide that there is sufficient evidence to show that your work breaches the Academic Integrity Policy by means of unacceptable academic practice, you will still be entitled to a mark. However, the marker will disregard all of the elements of your work that are in breach of the Academic Integrity Policy and the provisional mark you receive will be based only on the remainder. Therefore, you should expect the mark to be much lower than it would otherwise have been.

If you disagree with the department's findings, you might be able to request an independent review. To do this, you must normally have attended the meeting with the department to discuss the allegation and you must have good reason for disagreeing; it is not acceptable to say that the department were mistaken without having a compelling reason. You should contact the Student Affairs team in AQS by emailing academicintegrity@chester.ac.uk if you want to request an independent review.

Standard Penalty (Level 5 and above)

If the department finds that there is evidence to show that you have breached the Academic Integrity Policy at **Level 5 or above**, to be eligible for a **standard penalty**:

1. The suspected breach of the Academic Integrity Policy must be one of **unacceptable academic practice only**.
2. You must have accepted the outcome of the department's investigation;
3. You must not have previously breached the Academic Integrity Policy at Level 5 or higher; and
4. The piece of work in question must either be your first or second attempt at assessment.

If any of these do not apply or if there is any doubt, the case must be heard by an Academic Integrity Review Panel.

If you are eligible, your case will be considered by a subgroup of the Academic Integrity Review Panel and you will not be required to attend a hearing. If the subgroup confirms that your work does breach the Academic Integrity Policy, you will be given the opportunity to complete the online **Academic Integrity Course** within 14 days. You will receive an email to your University of Chester account with further details.

If you successfully complete and pass the test at the end of the Academic Integrity Course, you will be entitled to a provisional mark for the work you have submitted. However, the marker will disregard all of the elements of your work that are in breach of the Academic Integrity Policy and the provisional mark you receive will be based only on the remainder. Therefore, you should expect the mark to be much lower than it would otherwise have been.

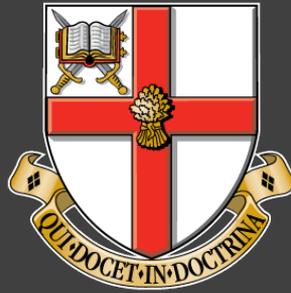
It will always be in your best interests to engage with the Academic Integrity Course and attempt the test. Failure to either successfully complete or engage with the course would result in you receiving a mark of zero for the piece of work or entire module respectively.

Academic Integrity Review Panel (All Levels)

If the matter cannot be resolved through a departmental review, standard penalty or if there is an allegation of **academic misconduct**, it will be referred to a hearing of the Academic Integrity Review Panel.

If this happens, AQS will write to you to give you the date and time of the hearing and you will be invited to attend and/or make a written submission.

If you would normally have been eligible for a standard penalty, but you want to contest the allegation, the case will need to be heard by an Academic Integrity Review Panel. However, if the case is proven, the maximum penalty available will still be the standard penalty (see above).



University of
Chester

**Student Guide to the Academic
Integrity Policy**

Why academic integrity matters

- An award from the University of Chester is valuable: employers and the public need to have confidence that the award represents the true knowledge and ability of the person holding it
- Students have a right to expect fairness: marks and credit are only awarded for hard work
- Respect for the work of others: giving people credit for their work is important

The Academic Integrity Policy

Academic Integrity Documents

- This short policy is split into two parts:
 - Part one: sets out five key principles of academic integrity
 - Part two: explains how academic integrity can be breached
- You can access the policy online via Portal
- All students must abide by the policy when completing assessments

Fairness to yourself and others

The University has a responsibility to ensure that every student has an equal opportunity to be successful. We expect you to play your part in this by adhering to the Academic Integrity Policy. This says that students **will do nothing that has the potential for them to gain an unfair advantage in assessment.**

Five principles of Academic Integrity

The Academic Integrity Policy sets out five key principles. All students are expected to abide by these principles every time they complete work for assessment.

By adhering to these principles you are showing respect for your own work and that of all other students at the University of Chester.

1. Acknowledge all sources of information, knowledge and ideas used when completing work for assessment by consistently and correctly using an acceptable referencing system.

- Show off your research
 - Use **quotation marks** when you're repeating the words of others from books, journals, the internet etc.
 - If you **paraphrase**, make sure the words you use are substantially different to your original sources
 - Always show your sources of information by providing a suitable **reference**
- Don't rush into your work. If you do, you're more likely to make costly mistakes
- If you're unsure, seek help BEFORE you submit your work

- 2. Produce work that is a product of your own individual efforts unless an assignment brief specifically requires a single piece of work be submitted on behalf of a group of students.**
- Talking to others about your work is a great way to get new perspectives and to share thoughts and ideas. But make sure you write your assignments alone and in your own words.
 - NEVER be tempted to get someone else to complete an assignment for you. Have confidence in your own ability and complete the work yourself.
 - Don't copy work from other people. Remember that the value of the University's awards relies on students obtaining marks and credit fairly.

3. Declare where work has been used before in a previous assessment (whether successful or not) using an acceptable referencing system.

- Produce a new piece of work for each assessment you're asked to complete; even if you think that the assignment brief is similar.
- If you think that some of your previous work is relevant, only incorporate parts that are essential. Show that you've done this by using quotation marks and referencing yourself.
- If you have reassessments to complete, you will sometimes be allowed to modify and improve work that you have already submitted **in that module only**. You should always check with your tutors first.

4. Present accurate information and data that has been obtained appropriately and which is a fair representation of your own endeavours, knowledge and understanding.

- Find your own voice and show off your knowledge, understanding, thoughts and ideas. Where you refer to the work of others, give them credit by referencing.
- Don't take shortcuts. Do your own research, gather your own data and reflect that information accurately and appropriately. If things don't go according to plan, talk to your tutors about how to deal with that in your assessment.
- Never be tempted to take the work of others or allow someone else to make alterations to your work.

5. Adhere to and comply with all applicable regulatory, legal and professional obligations and ethical requirements.

- Always follow the assignment brief you are given carefully. Abide by the information it provides and follow the University's regulations on assessment.
- If your work needs ethical approval it is your responsibility to obtain that and to follow by any conditions imposed. Your tutors will be able to help you if you are unsure.
- Maintain the highest standards of behaviour, act with honesty and integrity and do nothing that has the potential for you to gain an unfair advantage over other students.

Protecting your degree

The value of your award will depend on all students obtaining marks and academic credit fairly. The University will:

- Do its best to support students to develop good academic practice
- Take action where a student is suspected of having breached academic integrity
- Make sure that no student can gain an advantage by breaching academic integrity

Breaches of Academic Integrity

Unacceptable academic practice

- Plagiarism
- Reuse of previously submitted material
- Collusion

Academic misconduct

- Commissioning
- Falsification
- Research misconduct
- Breaching exam regs
- Cheating / dishonesty

Unacceptable academic practice

- Initially regarded as a mistake/oversight
- Can be remedied by further learning
- Sources of support available to assist
- Reduced penalty if student uses support
- In some cases, marks can still be awarded for those parts of work that have been produced fairly

Academic misconduct

- Behaviour is dishonest, grossly negligent and/or reckless
- Presents a clear threat to the University's academic standards
- No marks awarded
- Penalties can be severe

Three stage process

If a piece of work is suspected of breaching the Academic Integrity Policy, the student will be asked to take part in this process (there are slight differences for students at Level 3 and Level 4)

Detection

- Where a tutor believes that a piece of work is in breach of the Academic Integrity Policy, they must report this to the Head of Department (or equivalent)

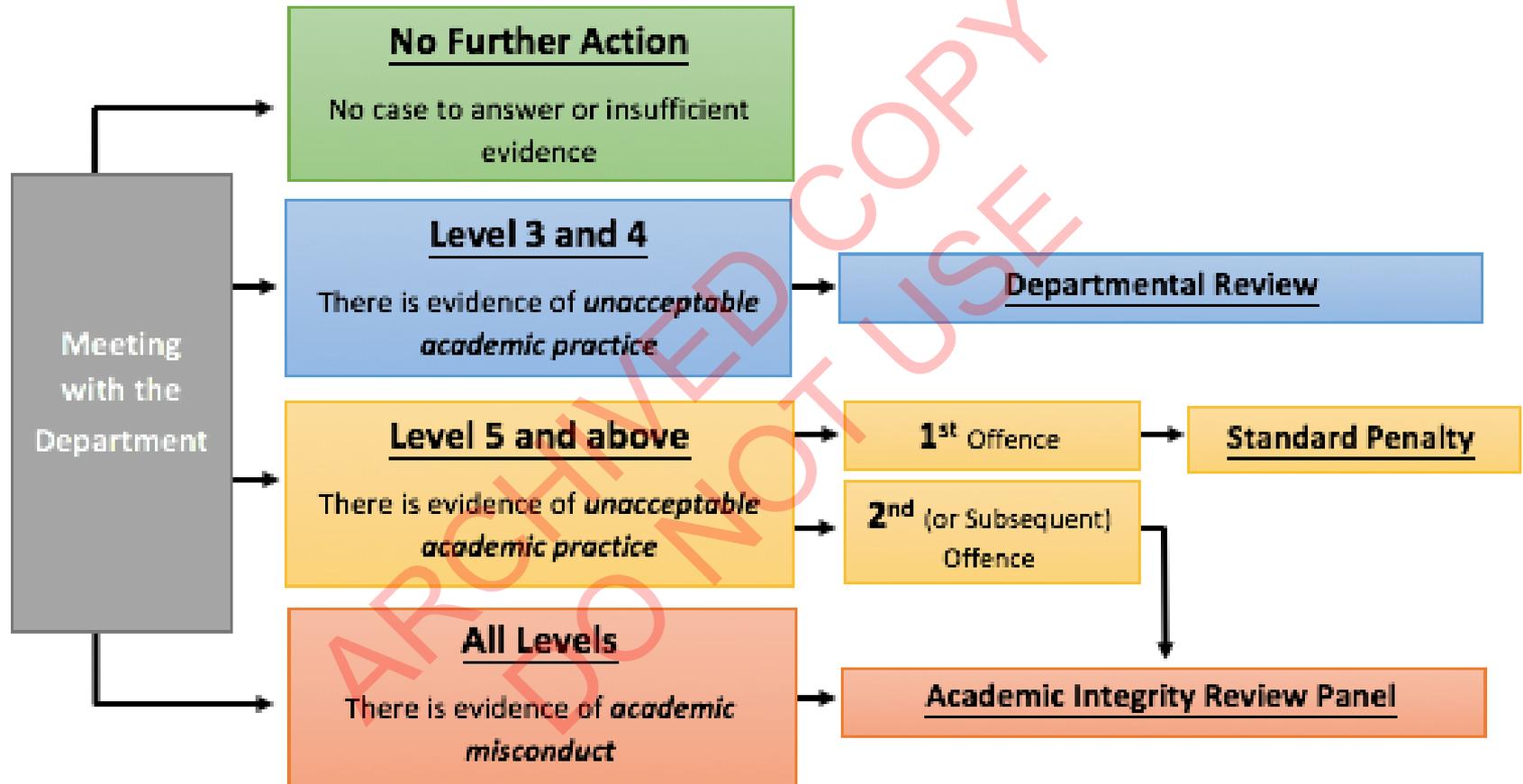
Investigation

- The Head of Department (or nominee) decides whether to call the student in to investigate the matter further. They will decide if the student has a case to answer.

Decision

- The Academic Integrity Review Panel receives cases from the Head of Department and makes the final decision about whether the Academic Policy has been breached and what penalty to apply.

Outcome of department investigation



Level 3 and Level 4

For cases of unacceptable academic practice only

- The Head of Department is entitled to decide that work breaches the Academic Integrity Policy by unacceptable academic practice.
- The student won't need to attend a hearing of the Panel.
- The student can request an independent review.
- The work will still be marked, but the mark will reflect the breach of academic integrity. This means that the mark will normally be much lower than it otherwise would have been.
- The student will be given help, advice and support to improve their academic practice to avoid future problems.

Level 5 and higher

For cases of unacceptable academic practice only

- Where this happens for the first time, in most cases, the student won't need to attend a hearing of the Panel.
- The student will be given the opportunity to develop good academic practice by completing the online Academic Integrity Course.
- If the student successfully completes the Academic Integrity Course, they will be entitled to a mark for their work. The mark will reflect the breach of academic integrity. This means that it will normally be much lower than it otherwise would have been.
- Penalties become more severe if the same or similar mistakes are repeated in future.

Other allegations

Second and subsequent allegations of unacceptable academic practice at Level 5 and higher and ALL allegations of academic misconduct

- The student will be asked to attend a hearing of the Academic Integrity Review Panel to explain their actions.
- The Head of Department (or nominee) will usually be present to outline how they think the student has breached the Academic Integrity Policy.
- If the Academic Integrity Review Panel decide that there has been a breach of academic integrity, it will apply a penalty. The penalty will depend on the nature of the case, but can be very severe.

Recap

- The Academic Integrity Policy and further information can be found by going to [PORTAL](#)
- It's important to remember the five principles of academic integrity: if you adhere to those, you're playing your part in protecting the value of the University's awards
- If you're unsure about anything relating to academic integrity, especially how to reference correctly, speak to your tutors, your PAT, get in touch with Study Skills and check our online resources