Procedures for Assessment Irregularity Investigation (Plagiarism, Practical Examination Irregularity, or Class Test Irregularity)
(Section 4.1 of the Code of Practice)
This section does not apply to Written Examinations

1. Concerns about plagiarism shall be reported to the (Academic Integrity Officer) AIO in the Principal Academic Unit (PAU) for consideration.

2. The AIO will consider the concerns and where appropriate undertake an investigation, which may involve gathering further evidence.

3. The AIO will hold a meeting with the Student (Academic Integrity Meeting). The AIO will write to the Student informing them of the allegation and inviting them to the Academic Integrity Meeting. The Student should normally be given at least five working days' notice and should be informed that they may be accompanied to the meeting by a Friend as defined in Regulation 1. The AIO may send the Student a copy of the text-matching software report or the student’s work highlighted to show examples of areas of concern, to help them to understand the allegation.

Academic Integrity Meeting

4. The Meeting will be held with the AIO or nominee and may include another appropriate member of staff, such as the relevant Module Leader or Programme Director and another member of staff may be present to take notes. The Student may be accompanied by a Friend as defined under Regulation 1. The Student is responsible for arranging a Friend to accompany them to the meeting.

5. The Academic Integrity Meeting will be an opportunity for the Student to respond to the allegation. The Student may be asked to explain their work and may be asked to provide drafts of their work to show the process involved in undertaking the assessment. The Student may present any mitigation to the AIO, who may consider this, when any sanction is to be applied.

6. If the Student fails to confirm their attendance at the Academic Integrity Meeting and/or confirms they will attend but fails to do so, the meeting may proceed in the Student’s absence.
7. Following the Academic Integrity meeting, the AIO in consultation with other appropriate members of staff at the Academic Integrity Meeting, will decide whether plagiarism has occurred and if so, assign a category, and depending on the category, apply an appropriate sanction.

8. This outcome should normally be communicated to the Student in writing (the Outcome Letter) within five working days of the Academic Integrity Meeting. The Outcome Letter will include key points of the discussions which took place in the meeting and the reasons for the decision and should be retained on the Student’s file.

Group Work and Collusion Investigation

9. Where an allegation of plagiarism involves group-based work or study, or involves suspected collusion (in work that may or may not be group-based work) and it is unclear where the responsibility for Assessment Irregularity lies, a meeting can be held with the Students individually, jointly or both of these options as it may be appropriate to meet with the Students individually and then follow up with a joint meeting.

10. Having investigated the circumstances, the AIO may be in a position to be able to differentiate between members of the group’s involvement in the plagiarism and avoid the imposition of a group penalty.

11. In cases of collusion, where a copy of a Student’s work is being shown to another Student, or as part of the evidence for a suspected plagiarism, care must be taken to make such copies anonymous wherever possible.

Investigation of Practical Examination Irregularities, Class Test Irregularities, Written Examination Irregularities/Academic Misconduct

(Section 4.2 of the Code of Practice)

12. Concerns about a Student’s conduct in a Practical Examination, Class Test or Written Examination or a PAU Written Examination shall be reported for consideration and investigated in accordance with Regulation 8 – Student Conduct. For Students on Fitness to Practise programmes, the concern should be reported to the FTP contact in the PAU. For non-FTP programmes the concerns should be reported to Student Conduct, Complaints and Appeals Team.
Determining the Category of the Assessment Irregularity

(Section 5 of the Code of Practice)

13. When considering any previous recorded instances of plagiarism, the AIO should only be considering instances which have occurred on the current level. e.g. where the student is on a PG programme of study and has undertaken an UG programme.

14. In plagiarism cases, the categorisation of the plagiarism will determined by the AIO using their academic judgement. Some guidance to assist with this determination is set out below:

14.1 Poor Academic Practice
This category would normally be applied to Level F or C studies and may include work which fails to follow academic conventions where the Student may not yet be familiar with the requirements of University level assessment. Examples of Poor Academic Practice include but are not limited to:

- first occurrence of inadequate referencing
- first occurrence of inclusion of a small amount of un-attributed or incorrectly attributed material
- first occurrence of inclusion of a small amount of text that is so similar to the original that it is effectively copied from the original source

14.2 Moderate Plagiarism
It is likely that cases of plagiarism at Levels I, H, M and D would normally come under at least this category and would normally include but not be limited to:

- moderate inclusion of un-attributed or incorrectly attributed copying.
- collusion
- repeated Poor Academic Practice
- limited self – plagiarism which may include the reproduction in part, or in full, of work which has been used for another assessment or work on the same Programme or course.

14.3 Serious Plagiarism– Academic Misconduct
This category includes but is not limited to:

- fabrication or misrepresentation
- commissioning/buying assessments
- reasonably extensive quantities of un-attributed or incorrectly attributed copying
• collusion
• repeated Moderate Plagiarism.
• plagiarism within the research element of a research Programme or a taught Programme, unless the extent was considered to be minimal
• submitting work which has in full or in part been obtained by fraud or deceit.
• submitting work that has in full or in part been commissioned.

Cases referred to a College Misconduct and Fitness to Practise Committee
(Section 6.2.2, 6.3 7 and of the Code of Practice)

15. Where a case is referred to a College Misconduct Committee in accordance with the above sections. The Investigating Officers Report should be prepared by the AIO and should normally be referred to Student Conduct or in the case of Fitness to Practise (FTP) Programmes, the FTP contact in the College.