

South Central TEI

Guidance on the application within the TEI of procedures for assessment irregularities, including plagiarism

Guidance on handling assessment irregularities within Common Awards in general can be found at

<https://www.dur.ac.uk/common.awards/policies/conduct.assessment/irregularities/> .

This is itself an application of Durham University's overarching policy, found at <https://www.dur.ac.uk/learningandteaching.handbook/6/2/4/>

- 1) Internal examiners should refer any suspected assessment irregularity, including plagiarism or collusion, to the relevant programme leader.

In the case of formative assessment, the programme leader shall deal with this informally within the context of the student's academic award. However if there is evidence of significant dishonesty, this may be taken into account in assessing the student's fitness for ministry.

- 2) If assessment irregularity is suspected in the case of summative work, the programme leader shall ensure that a report is made to the Chair of the Board of Examiners as soon as possible. This report shall include an assessment of whether there is evidence of similar behaviour in other work submitted by the student for summative assessment previously in that academic year; where possible, Turnitin should be used to check that work.
- 3) The suspicion shall not be raised with the student before this report has been made and guidance of the Chair on the appropriate process has been sought.
- 4) If the Chair believes that the report provides sufficient evidence that an offence has been committed, the Chair may give permission to the centre to hold an informal meeting with the student to discuss the matter.

The purpose of this meeting is to support the student by helping the student be clear on the nature of the alleged offence, and enabling them to consider whether they wish to suggest mitigating factors be taken into account were the offence proven. The meeting must not be used to gather evidence to incriminate the student. It must also be made clear to the student that no decisions can be made at the meeting.

- 5) The student shall be required to attend the formal meeting of the sub-panel of the Board of Examiners convened to consider the alleged offence. However in the context of an institution with dispersed staff and students, and with many part-time students, it is possible that the time and/or venue of the meeting would make it very inconvenient for the student to attend, though of course the TEI will seek to accommodate the attendance of the student where possible.¹ Attendance at the meeting (by the student and/or by members of the panel) may be virtual, but it is not a requirement that the TEI facilitate this.² Hence the student may choose to present a written submission or to be represented at the meeting by a member of staff willing to undertake this role (who shall not be a member of the panel). In being told the purpose of the meeting, the student shall at least be told which irregularity is suspected and in which assignment(s), and reminded of the possible penalties that could be imposed. If the student is not present, the panel may request further evidence from the student, but need not reconvene for a formal meeting to consider that evidence and finalise its recommendation.
- 6) If the student still has further summatively assessed work to submit for their award, the programme leader shall ensure that an appropriate member of staff meets with the student to counsel the student on how to avoid infringing the assessment regulations in future. The programme leader shall ensure that a note of the date and time of this meeting is kept in the students file.

¹ It is not reasonable to require staff to travel significant distances or to work outside their normal hours when the meeting is in response to what seems *prima facie* to be an instance of misconduct on the part of the student.

² It is highly likely that the TEI could offer the opportunity for one person to be present via video conferencing. However it should not be assumed the multiple people could be present in this way, nor that the student would have easy access to the technology they would need to participate in this way.