The following is a guide for Assessment Offence cases considered at institutional level. The decision as to the penalty to be applied is the judgement of the Assessment Offence Panel, or of the Chair/Deputy where they are acting on behalf of the panel. In all cases the Chair’s/Deputy’s, or Panel’s decision is final.

The Chair/Deputy, or Panel have the discretion to apply the whole range of penalties and will provide the student with the reason(s) for the penalty to be applied.

Key issues that should be considered when deciding an appropriate penalty:

- The severity of the offence – for example in plagiarism cases the volume of plagiarism detected - this is not limited to the amount of text, or similarity index on turnitin but may also include the structure of a piece of work, or the unattributed ideas of others.
- The size of assessment e.g. final year project dissertation or standard assignment weighting.
- Intent to deceive – for example the use of a paid ghost-writing service shows no attempt to produce work, is fraudulent and will be treated with the utmost seriousness.
- Level of study - 1st year undergraduate students may be treated more leniently than final year undergraduate and postgraduate students who can reasonably be expected to be aware of the conventions of referencing and good academic practice.
- Behaviour such as accusing an innocent student of complicity, for example in collusion cases, or jeopardising another student’s academic standing, for example stealing an exam script.
- The effect of the penalty i.e. if a penalty means that a student cannot achieve their intended award.
- That a student who commits an assessment offence is not advantaged over a student who fails honestly.
- Extenuating Circumstances supported by evidence will be considered when a penalty is decided. However when a student submits assessment (coursework and exams) they are declaring themselves fit to sit and this will be taken into account.

Penalties that may be applied from the Academic Regulations

- a formal reprimand;
- failure (a mark of zero) in the element of assessment in which the offence occurred, with a resubmission of that element permitted within the same attempt at the module. This resubmission shall not count as an additional attempt, but the mark for the resubmitted element of assessment shall be capped to the minimum pass mark.
- failure (a mark of zero) in the module of which the assessment forms a part, with the maximum mark on any resit or retake limited to the minimum pass mark;
- failure (a mark of zero) in the module which the assessment forms a part, with no permission to resit or retake the module;
v. failure (with marks of zero) of the whole diet of modules taken during the academic year in which the offence occurred. Where resit attempts remain, the resit mark shall not be automatically capped to the minimum pass mark, irrespective of the regulations for that programme of study. However, the maximum mark achievable on resit shall be no higher than that achieved at the first attempt (before the penalty mark of zero was applied). If a module was failed at the first attempt then the resit mark shall be capped to the minimum pass mark;

vi. failure (with marks of zero) of the whole diet of modules taken during the academic year in which the offence occurred, with the maximum mark on any resits or retakes limited to the minimum pass mark;

For very serious cases the Academic Regulations permit a panel to request that a student is suspended or expelled.

### Example Penalties

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Offence</th>
<th>Example offence</th>
<th>Commonly applied penalty</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Plagiarism</td>
<td>A small amount of plagiarism, first offence by a 1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; year undergraduate</td>
<td>Penalty ii. Or iii.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A first offence by a 2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt; or 3&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt; year UG student, or Masters student</td>
<td>Penalty ii. Or iii. Expectation penalty would normally be iii.</td>
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<tr>
<td>A second offence of plagiarism</td>
<td>A more severe penalty than the 1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; offence.</td>
<td>Normally a minimum of penalty iii. If offence is in the same module as previous offence normally minimum penalty iv.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam Offence</td>
<td>e.g. mobile phone on person, written notes, unauthorised material, writing on a person</td>
<td>Penalty iii. and v. Failure in all modules taken during the academic year. Student is able to resit modules at the next available opportunity. Module in which the offence was committed is capped on the resit (penalty iii.) Generally the student retains coursework mark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other offences</td>
<td>Ghost-writing, Fraudulent research/data</td>
<td>Dependent on the facts of the case, generally offences such as these will incur severe penalties that reflect the nature of the case.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A major element is a coursework component worth 31 per cent or more towards the overall mark for any module, and to allegations of a second, or subsequent offence and exam offences.

**Assessment Offence procedure for major elements of assessment**

School/Institute refer case to the Academic Registrar for Investigation via the Appeals, Complaint and Conduct Office

Student is notified of offence and provided with evidence. 
For plagiarism cases students will be interviewed and may be accompanied to the interview. 
Student asked to accept or deny the allegation.

Student admits, does not deny offence, or does not respond.

Case considered by the Chair/Deputy who determine if an offence has been committed and the penalty to be applied.

Student informed of outcome in writing. 
Student record amended to reflect penalty applied.

Student denies allegation or wishes to have case considered by panel.

Assessment Offences Panel hearing. 
The panel determined if an offence has been committed and the penalty to be applied.

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Student may appeal a decision within 14 days under the QMUL appeal regulations: [http://www.arcs.qmul.ac.uk/students/student-appeals/appeals/index.html](http://www.arcs.qmul.ac.uk/students/student-appeals/appeals/index.html)