



# **Academic Discipline Policy & Procedures**

## Academic Discipline Policy & Procedures

1. Scope.....	3
2. Definition of academic misconduct, Academic Concern and Academic Offence.....	3
3. Policy Context.....	4
4. Policy Coverage.....	4
5. Academic Discipline Procedures.....	5
6. Stage One: Formal Investigation.....	9
7. Stage Two: The Academic Conduct Panel (ACP).....	10
A) Category 1 Offences.....	11
B) Category 2 Offences.....	12
C) Category 3 Offences.....	12
D) Where no offence is deemed to have occurred.....	12
E) Additional Notes.....	12
8. Stage Three: The Appeal Process.....	13
A) Grounds for Appeal.....	13
B) Review of Appeal Form.....	13
C) Consideration of Appeal.....	14
D) Appeal Outcomes.....	14
9. Implementation of academic discipline decisions.....	15
10. Completion of Procedures Letters.....	16
11. Referral to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA).....	16
Appendix 1: Guidance on Academic Practice.....	17
Appendix 2: Academic Concern / Offence Form.....	20
Appendix 3: Academic Discipline Appeal Request Form.....	23
Core Documentation Record Page.....	25

## 1. SCOPE

- 1.1 The purposes of this policy and its associated procedures are to:
- a) Ensure that the University College of Osteopathy (UCO) and its students can have confidence in the value and basis of its awards.
  - b) Identify the UCO's expectations of learners at all stages of study and the responsibilities of students and staff in meeting those expectations.
  - c) Differentiate appropriately between the intellectual and the technical aspects of academic practice, maintaining a focus on the development of the former.
  - d) Provide a consistent and coherent approach to the treatment of academic offences, differentiating these from issues of academic concern.
  - e) Specify the roles of reasonableness and probability in the assumption of intent underpinning academic offence.

## 2. DEFINITION OF ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT, ACADEMIC CONCERN AND ACADEMIC OFFENCE

- 2.1 Academic misconduct can be defined as “Any action by a student which gives or has the potential to give an unfair advantage in an examination or assessment or might assist someone else to gain an unfair advantage, or any activity likely to undermine the integrity essential to scholarship and research.”
- 2.2 Because of the issues and factors surrounding academic practice, the UCO distinguishes issues of academic concern from those of academic offence, as follows:
- a) Where the integrity of academic process has been deemed to be compromised such that the UCO does not have a reasonable level of confidence that an outcome reflects the performance or eligibility of a student concerned, in the context of UCO regulations, an issue of academic concern should be identified.
  - b) An academic concern is often a first offence of plagiarism committed in the student's first year of study with the UCO (see definition of plagiarism in Section 4 below).
  - c) Academic offences are identified (by the Academic Conduct Panel) as occasions or circumstances within which it can be demonstrated on the balance of probabilities<sup>1</sup> that a student has deliberately, knowingly, or through culpable negligence, used unfair means to achieve an assessment or some other aspect of their academic or academically based progress, as an applicant or student of the UCO.

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<sup>1</sup> This reflects the civil standard of proof in respect of the level of certainty that must be achieved to prove disputed allegations or charges. The criminal standard of proof demands that a panel be wholly convinced that facts are proven, 'beyond reasonable doubt', while the civil standard requires the panel to be persuaded that the facts are more likely than not to be true: the facts need to be proven 'on the balance of probabilities'.

### 3. POLICY CONTEXT

- 3.1 If a student on a taught course leading to a UCO award is accused of an alleged academic offence, the procedures described in this Policy must be followed.
- 3.2 Where a student is on a course that confers fitness to practise as approved by a Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB), the alleged academic offence should be considered through the procedures set out in this policy and procedures.
- 3.3 The implications that an academic offence is likely to have for a student's fitness to practise should only be considered once the outcome of the academic offence procedures is confirmed and should be managed through the implementation of the procedures contained in the UCO's Fitness to Practise and Professional Behaviour Policy. To avoid doubt, the academic offence and fitness to practise procedures must not be operated simultaneously.
- 3.4 Disciplinary issues not associated with academic concerns or offences as defined in this policy will be dealt with through the UCO's [Student Code of Conduct Policy and Disciplinary Procedure](#) or [Fitness to Practise Policy](#).
- 3.5 The Academic Conduct Panel is not an appeal forum, and students may not refer cases to it. Where a student has a concern about an Examination Board decision or the provision of a service, they must use the [Academic Appeals Policy](#) or [Student Complaints Procedure](#) as appropriate. In the event that a fellow student has concerns about an action of a colleague in the context of this policy, the student should raise their concerns with the Registrar, providing relevant evidence for consideration. Impartial advice for students is available from the Student Support Office.
- 3.6 For specific guidance on issues regarding disability and plagiarism, staff should contact the Student Support Department in the first instance.

### 4. POLICY COVERAGE

- 4.1 The following offences, committed in the course of a student's academic work, are covered by this policy:
  - a) **Collusion:** This offence is the joint production with another person or persons of an assessment that contributes to a unit grade where this is not permissible in the assessment task. It includes knowingly supplying work, with consent, for the use of another, where this is not permitted by the assessment task brief, and negligence in protecting work (in hard copy and electronic formats). It also includes examination/test collusion, i.e. using, or supplying/allowing help or information to others, in a manner not explicitly permitted by the regulations for the examinations, for example by disclosing information on examination questions on chat groups whilst an examination is still live.
  - b) **Fabrication:** This offence consists of the presentation of any false or fabricated information, results or conclusions in any form of assessment, including practical work, field studies, number of hours (including Clinic hours) completed, oral presentations, interviews and reports on work placements. It also includes the fabrication of information within an application for study at the UCO.

- c) **Cheating:** This offence consists of attempting to complete an examination or in-class test that counts towards a unit grade by unfair means, including but not limited to:
- i. deliberately acquiring advance knowledge of the detailed content of an examination;
  - ii. obtaining help from others in a manner not explicitly permitted by the regulations for the examination, including the use of mobile telephones, or any other electronic device capable of sending or receiving text or any electronic device etc.;
  - iii. bringing into the examination any unauthorised materials; or
  - iv. referring during the examination to any unauthorised material.
  - v. Copying another students work in an examination or assessment.
- d) **Impersonation:** This offence is the assumption by any person of the identity of a student with intent to deceive or gain unfair advantage. Impersonation commonly entails using a substitute to undertake, in full or part, an examination or other assessment task.
- e) **Contract cheating:** This offence involves someone completing work for a student, who then submits this as their own. This could include use of essay mills or buying work online.
- f) **Plagiarism:** This offence consists of copying work or attempting to copy from any other source, published or unpublished, including the work of a fellow student or another person, in a manner not authorised by the regulations of the assessment, and presenting the copied work as if it were the student's own work. It includes written and non-written forms of production, for example, in performance, design, the making of artefacts or other objects, and oral presentations, and may constitute part or all of a submitted assessment. It also includes self-plagiarism, where a student submits their own work for another assessment where it is not permitted.
- g) **Breaches of research and ethical procedures:** This offence includes carrying out research without prior ethical approval.

- 4.2 Further guidance about good academic practice and responsibilities regarding good academic practice can be found in [Appendix 1](#).

## 5. ACADEMIC DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES

### A) INTRODUCTION

- 5.1 The initial responsibility for detection rests with each individual staff member who needs to be vigilant in detecting instances of impersonation, collusion or cheating when acting as an invigilator in an examination, and in recognising instances of academic concern, and of fabrication, possible collusion and plagiarism when reviewing work submitted for assessment.
- 5.2 Where a potential offence is identified, this policy and procedure must be followed. It is not acceptable, for example, to ignore a potential offence, or to amend the grade to be awarded

as a means of imposing a penalty, or of penalising suspected plagiarism or bad academic practice.

- 5.3 Where work submitted by students is the subject of academic offence investigation it should be marked and graded (in copy if necessary) on the basis of the submission but should not be processed at the relevant Portfolio Assessment Board or Examination Board until the investigation is completed.
- 5.4 In the case of plagiarism, an academic concern arises where an individual does not have sufficient confidence in the independence and or authorship of work submitted by a student as the basis for award.
- 5.5 The Academic Conduct Panel (ACP) is responsible for determining when an academic offence has been committed, on the basis of an intent to gain unfair advantage in, or evade the requirements of, academic process.
- 5.6 In any of the above categories, where, in discussions between a member of academic staff and their Unit Leader it is deemed that there is no potential case to answer, no further action will be taken within this policy.

## B) INVESTIGATION AND PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS

### i. CHEATING, IMPERSONATION AND COLLUSION (IN EXAMINATIONS/TESTS)

- 5.7 If an invigilator in an examination or in-class test has cause to suspect any student of cheating, for example by the discovery of any unauthorised books, notes, electronic devices or papers brought into the examination, s/he should inform the Registrar. The suspected materials will be confiscated or removed when discovered, and a note made on the student's script of the point at which the material was confiscated. The student will be permitted to complete the examination.
- 5.8 If an invigilator in an examination or in-class test has cause to suspect any student of impersonation, s/he should inform the Registrar who should then ask the student to write their date of birth and signature on the front cover of the completed script. The student will be permitted to complete the examination.
- 5.9 If an invigilator in an examination or in-class test has cause to suspect students of collusion, s/he should inform the Registrar who should then make a note on the script of each student suspected of collusion, of the point at which the suspected collusion was detected. The students will be permitted to complete the examination.
- 5.10 In the above cases, the Registrar will submit a written report on the incident to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education), to include a description of the evidence that cheating, or impersonation has occurred, together with details of the student's name, the date and time of the examination and any other relevant information, including the examination script(s).
- 5.11 In the event of suspected impersonation or collusion in any non-examination/test assessment, the member of academic staff suspecting the offence should raise the issue with their Unit Leader who, on confirmation of a suspected offence, will sign Parts 1 and 2 of the Academic

Concern/Offence form and submit to the Registrar, along with any available evidence in relation to all students potentially involved.

- ii. IMPERSONATION, FABRICATION, CONTRACT CHEATING, BREACHES OF RESEARCH AND ETHICAL PROCEDURES AND COLLUSION IN ASSESSMENTS, OTHER THAN EXAMINATIONS / TIMED TESTS, AND IN ADMISSIONS INFORMATION

5.12 Where a member of teaching staff reviewing or marking an assessment or practice/placement records submitted as part of a taught programme of study suspects fabrication of information, the member of staff will inform the Unit Leader who, on confirmation of a suspected offence, will sign Parts 1 and 2 of the Academic Concern/Offence form and pass it on to the Registrar with relevant evidence such as the source documents and a copy of the assessment brief.

5.13 Where a member of staff suspects fabrication of information (on the basis of invention, information theft or impersonation) submitted as part of an application for admission, the member of staff will inform the Admissions Tutor who will complete Parts 1 and 2 of the Academic Concern/Offence form and pass it on to the Registrar with relevant evidence such as the source documents and a copy of the assessment brief, and this will be prepared for the Academic Conduct Panel (ACP).

- iii. PLAGIARISM

5.14 It is the responsibility of markers to be aware of the potential for bad academic practice within the assessment process, and to follow up on all potential cases identified in line with this policy.

5.15 Once a member of staff has completed the Academic Concern/Offence form (Part 1), they should discuss the potential case with the relevant Unit Leader who will confirm whether there is a case to answer in respect of plagiarism, within the terms of the UCO's Academic Discipline Process or whether the case constitutes an issue of academic concern.

5.16 All coursework is submitted to Turnitin, a web-based originality checking system, which allows tutors to check students' work for potential plagiarism by comparing it against continuously updated databases of text to be found on the Internet. Originality reports provide tutors with the opportunity to teach students about academic integrity and appropriate citation methods as well as checking for potential plagiarism.

5.17 Turnitin seeks matches with text to be discovered in its databases and therefore reveals only the extent to which an assessment contains text which matches another source discoverable electronically. This does not, in and of itself, indicate academic offence, since the output of text-matching may include text that is copied and accurately quoted, text that has been copied and then manipulated to fall short of a direct copy, and text that must be copied in order to be accurate (e.g., titles and format elements). Neither is it the case that text-matching against online and stored sources will identify all areas of potential plagiarism.

5.18 Where text-matching is used as the basis on which an issue of academic concern or offence (related to either collusion or plagiarism) is provisionally identified, or as confirmation of the extent of copying from a pre-identified source or other essay, it should be used only as an indicator and not as a substitute for academic judgment.



- 5.19 The following will be treated as issues of academic concern in the context of this policy.
- 5.20 Where no previous case of plagiarism or other academic offence has been confirmed, a student who is found to have committed bad academic practice or poor referencing will be treated as an issue of academic concern, as follows:
- 5.21 For a student at Level 4 or a newly registered student undertaking their first written assignment at Level 5 or above who has made use of the ideas and/or words of others with attribution that is incomplete and/or inaccurate (poor referencing), but where it is possible to evaluate the submission for grading purposes, the work will be returned only within the context of a face-to-face discussion between the marker and the student, recorded on the Notification of Academic Concern / Offence Form ([Appendix 2](#)). The form will be held by the Registrar.
- 5.22 For a student at Level 4 or a newly registered student undertaking their first written assignment at Level 5 or above who has made unattributed use of the ideas and/or words of others, with no evidence of an attempt to acknowledge sources (bad academic practice), the work will be considered a fail (Grade F or 0%) and the student required to undertake specified guidance and support as a condition of referral. A record of the occurrence will be maintained by the Registrar. In such cases, a letter from the Unit Leader will confirm:
- The process and penalty to be applied (as above).
  - The requirement for guidance and advice, and for confirmation that this has been undertaken, as a condition of resubmission.
  - The deadline by which confirmation of guidance received is required.
- 5.23 Second occurrences of either type following completion of a previous academic concerns process, or Level 5 students completing a second or subsequent assessment, will automatically be passed to the Academic Conduct Panel as potential academic offences.
- 5.24 In the case of a suspected academic offence of plagiarism (i.e., supported by evidence that does not characterise it as an issue of academic concern), a prima facie case will exist where there is evidence of bad academic practice and an indication of an attempt to mislead or evade, and/or evidence of prior academic concern dealt with as a potential academic offence.
- 5.25 Where there is indication, in the work of a student at any stage of study, of a deliberate attempt to mislead or evade (e.g., misleading rather than incorrect referencing) the case will be deemed at the identification stage, and subsequently treated, as a potential academic offence and referred to the ACP for consideration.
- 5.26 Where evidence of prior academic concern has been dealt with appropriately (i.e. there is evidence that the Unit Leader informed the student of the concern and of any appropriate requirements), a subsequent case of bad academic practice, with or without evidence of a deliberate attempt to mislead or evade will be deemed at the identification stage, and subsequently treated as, a potential academic offence and referred to the ACP under academic offence process A (Stage 2). In this case, bad practice will be deemed to constitute one/both of the following:
- The use of the ideas and/or words of others with attribution that is incomplete and/or inaccurate (poor referencing).



b) The unattributed use of the ideas and/or words of others (bad academic practice).

5.27 The Unit Leader will make the initial decision about this matter.

5.28 In all instances, where academic misconduct is suspected and preliminary evidence has been gathered, the Registrar (or a nominee) will normally contact the student by email (to their UCO email address) within 5 working days to notify them of the suspected offence as well as the evidence that supports the case. The student will be given the opportunity to admit the offence and submit mitigating circumstances. Where admitted, a formal investigation is not necessary, and details will be forwarded for consideration by the Academic Conduct Panel in cases of academic offence (see below). Where sections 5.21 or 5.22 apply in cases of plagiarism, the outcomes stated will normally be applied.

5.29 The student will have the right of appeal against any decisions applied at this stage (see [Section 8](#))

5.30 In cases where the student denies the allegations, a more detailed formal investigation will be undertaken.

## 6. STAGE ONE: FORMAL INVESTIGATION

6.1 Where 5.30 applies, the Registrar will consult with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) to appoint an Investigating Officer who will be a member of staff who has had no previous involvement in the case and with no close relationship or complaint history with the student.

6.2 The Registrar, on behalf of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) will issue the Investigating Officer with the UCO's "Guidance for Investigations" (available on request from [quality@uco.ac.uk](mailto:quality@uco.ac.uk)) and instruct them to undertake an investigation of the case in accordance with this guidance.

6.3 The Investigating Officer will review the evidence collected at the preliminary stage and contact both the student and relevant unit leader to discuss the case, informing the student that they may bring a fellow UCO student with them to any investigation meeting for support and, for particularly complex cases, that the Investigating Officer may be accompanied by another staff member who will act as a note-taker. A meeting with the student may not be required in all cases if the investigating officer does not think this is needed, but this will be decided in agreement with the student.

6.4 The Investigating Officer may arrange to meet with the student more than once to clarify facts or events as the investigation proceeds.

6.5 The Investigating Officer may arrange to meet with other students and staff directly relevant to the case at their discretion. In all cases individuals will be advised that they may bring a fellow UCO student or colleague with them for support and that the Investigating Officer will be accompanied by another staff member who will act as a note-taker.

6.6 A written record of each investigation meeting will be taken and provided to individuals to confirm as an accurate representation of the meeting. The written record of investigation meetings will normally inform the outcome to the investigation. Audio or video recordings of

meetings may be taken for the purpose of informing the written report only and will not normally be deleted once the written record has been confirmed by all parties.

- 6.7 As part of their investigation the Investigation Officer may also gather other evidence which will likewise inform the Investigating Officer's report and inform the outcome to the investigation.
- 6.8 The investigating officer may need to obtain additional opinion to inform an investigation. Such opinions should be sought from individuals who have had no prior involvement with the student and the names of those individuals providing advice should be provided in the report.
- 6.9 The investigation will be undertaken promptly but thoroughly, with the aim that stage two should normally be completed within 20 working days of the appointment of the investigator.
- 6.10 The Investigating Officer will produce an Investigation Report based on their findings and using the civil standard of proof (the balance of probabilities) conclude whether the case should proceed to an Academic Conduct Panel hearing.

## 7. STAGE TWO: THE ACADEMIC CONDUCT PANEL (ACP)

- 7.1 The function of the Academic Conduct Panel (ACP) is to ensure all alleged cases of academic offence are investigated and to ensure consistency of approach across the UCO.
- 7.2 The Academic Conduct Panel will comprise as a membership pool the Deputy Vice-Chancellors, Registrar, UCO Course and Unit Leaders as appropriate. Members of Academic Staff with similar standing from UCO partners may be co-opted onto the panel or a professionally registered staff member e.g., when the offence is linked to practice-based assessment.
- 7.3 It will meet on an ad hoc basis as needed, and a record will be kept of its decisions and the basis for decisions, on all occasions.
- 7.4 At each meeting, the panel will normally comprise a Chair (a Deputy Vice-Chancellor or nominee), at least one Course or Unit Leader not previously involved in the case, a member of the Student Union where this is possible, the Registrar and a secretary appointed by the Registrar.
- 7.5 For staff development purposes, one member of academic staff not associated with any of the cases under consideration may be permitted to attend as an observer.
- 7.6 Cases submitted to the Registrar will normally be considered by the ACP within ten working days of the investigation report being received. The student concerned should have at least five working days' notice of the hearing and the right to provide a written submission in lieu of attendance at the hearing. Where less than five working days' notice is provided, the student will have the right to request a rescheduling of the meeting
- 7.7 The student will also be advised that s/he should contact the Students' Union for advice and that s/he may bring a friend (who is a registered student of the UCO) or a representative of the Students' Union to the meeting with the ACP.

- 7.8 Where the ACP does not find evidence of academic offence it may dismiss the case (in all categories) or in the case of a plagiarism charge refer the case back to the Unit Leader for treatment as an academic concern.
- 7.9 Where a student does not respond, or chooses to submit a written response in lieu of attendance, the ACP will consider their case in their absence, and no representation will be permitted. Only in exceptional circumstances, and at the discretion of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education), will a student be permitted to attend an ACP later than that nominated by the UCO.
- 7.10 The ACP will be chaired by a Deputy Vice-Chancellor, the Registrar or a Course Leader and a record of decisions arising within the academic year will be maintained at each meeting for reference.
- 7.11 The ACP will normally invite the Investigating Officer to present the case and the Unit Leader in which each case arises to send a representative to outline each case. Where it is deemed to be appropriate, the ACP may decide to hold the hearing on the basis of the written investigation report and preliminary evidence only.
- 7.12 The ACP will also hear from the student to clarify any questions arising prior to or arising from the submission of any student response. The student will also have the right to call witnesses in support of their case.
- 7.13 All students attending an ACP will be interviewed individually.
- 7.14 The ACP will meet with the student and the Course representative together.
- 7.15 The ACP will give full consideration to each case. The case against the student will be found proved if it is substantiated on the basis of a reasonable interpretation of the evidence and on the balance of probabilities.
- 7.16 The ACP will convey the decision in writing, by both letter and email, to the student concerned within five working days of the ACP and will confirm in writing with the Course Leader any penalty to be applied, including any action required by the appropriate Board of Examiners.
- 7.17 In cases of academic offence arising from plagiarism, the ACP determines only the distinction between academic offence and academic concern, and thus may not impose a penalty less than that arising from the treatment of a particular case as an academic concern.

#### CRITERIA FOR ACP DECISIONS AND PENALTIES

##### A) CATEGORY 1 OFFENCES

- 7.18 Where the integrity of academic process has been compromised and the Academic Conduct Panel establishes a basis for confidence, under reasonable interpretation, that a student acted with culpable negligence and in a way designed to gain unfair advantage within academic process as defined by the UCO regulations:
- a) The work affected will be deemed to be a non-submission/fail in line with the UCO's regulations.

- b) The student concerned will receive a written warning advising them of the likely consequences of any future academic offences.
- c) The student will be advised to seek remedial advice and required to do so as a condition of continued registration.
- d) The case will be recorded by the Registrar to ensure that any repeat offence is treated appropriately.

## B) CATEGORY 2 OFFENCES

7.19 Where the integrity of academic process has been compromised and the offence is deemed by the ACP, on the balance of available evidence, to represent a deliberate and/or repeated attempt by a student to subvert/evade the requirements of academic process as defined by the UCO regulations, the ACP will consider one or more of the following:

- a) Whether the student should be allowed either to resubmit the assessment or retake the unit on the next occasion it is offered.
- b) Whether the student should fail the entire unit of assessment and be required to retake it during the following academic year as part of a retake year.
- c) Whether the student on a course leading to a professional qualification should be subject to the UCO's Fitness to Practise Policy.
- d) Whether a recommendation should be made to the Chair of Academic Council that the student should be required to withdraw from their course and the UCO, and/or any previous award rescinded and/or study for further award prohibited.

## C) CATEGORY 3 OFFENCES

7.20 Where the basis for admission to a programme of study is found to have been fabricated in full or in part, the UCO reserves the right to require the student to withdraw from his/her course and from the UCO on the basis of the Registrar's confirmation of the ACP recommendation.

7.21 It will be possible to impose a lower category penalty alongside a higher category offence has occurred, e.g., a written warning can be sent to a student alongside another penalty imposed as a Category 2 offence.

## D) WHERE NO OFFENCE IS DEEMED TO HAVE OCCURRED

7.22 Where the ACP does not find that an academic offence has been committed, but does find that the integrity of academic process has been compromised so that the UCO does not have a reasonable level of confidence that an outcome reflects the performance or eligibility of a student concerned, in the context of UCO regulations, the case will be returned to the area of study in which it arose, to be dealt with through the academic concerns process.

## E) ADDITIONAL NOTES

7.23 The UCO reserves the right to rescind and deprive a student of any award granted where an academic offence allegation has been substantiated after an award has been conferred.

- 7.24 In the case of students who have a proven academic offence on their transcript at the final stage of study leading to an access diploma, an undergraduate or postgraduate award, the outcome of the award may be negatively impacted upon, and this should be detailed within the ACP.

## 8. STAGE THREE: THE APPEAL PROCESS

### A) GROUNDS FOR APPEAL

- 8.1 The student will have the right of appeal against the decision of the ACP on the following grounds:
- That the student has new evidence that they were unable to provide, for valid reasons, to the ACP when it arrived at its decision.
  - That there is a reasonable perception of bias during the ACP procedure or that the ACP reached an unreasonable decision.
  - That the penalty imposed was disproportionate in view of the circumstances or was not permitted under the procedures.
  - That the academic discipline procedure was not followed correctly.
- 8.2 A student found to have committed an academic offence and in receipt of a penalty has no right to appeal the academic judgment underpinning that penalty.
- 8.3 An appeal request should be submitted no later than 10 working days following the notification of the ACP decision, through completion of the Academic Discipline Appeal Request Form ([Appendix 3](#)), as well as the submission of relevant evidence.

### B) REVIEW OF APPEAL FORM

- 8.4 The Registrar will evaluate the student's Academic Discipline Appeal Request Form to determine that the student has:
- Legitimate grounds for an appeal.
  - Submitted the request for an appeal within the required timeframe.
  - Submitted the request for a review within the required format.
- 8.5 Following a review of the student's Academic Discipline Appeal Request Form, the Registrar will write to the student to acknowledge receipt of their request and:
- Inform them that their request has been rejected if it is determined that the student does not have legitimate grounds for an appeal, or they have not submitted the request within the required timeframe or format, in which case the Registrar will explain why their request has been rejected and issue them with a Completion of Procedures letter as set out in Section 10.

- b) Inform them that their request has been successful and will proceed to Stage 3, in which case the Registrar will confirm the purpose and scope of the appeal with the student and explain the possible outcomes to manage the student's expectations.

8.6 Where the student's request to appeal the Stage 2 ACP decision is successful, it will be considered under the Stage 3 review procedure which is final.

### C) CONSIDERATION OF APPEAL

8.7 The appeal will be undertaken by a designated senior member of staff, appointed by the Registrar in consultation with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education), who has had no previous involvement in the case and who has no close relationship or complaint history with the student.

8.8 The Registrar will confirm the purpose and scope of the appeal with the designated member of staff and provide them with the following documentation to review:

- a) The documentation gathered at the preliminary stage of the process, including the academic offence/concern form.
- b) The academic misconduct investigation report, where available
- c) The report of the ACP and the ACP outcome letter.
- d) The Academic Misconduct Appeal Request Form ([Appendix 3](#)) and any additional evidence submitted by the student in support of their appeal.

8.9 The designated member of staff will undertake a review of the above documentation within the scope of the appeal request and determine an outcome as set out in Section 8E.

8.10 The designated member of staff will produce a written record of their appeal review including an explanation of their determined outcome.

8.11 The designated member of staff will normally provide their written response on the appeal within 10 working days of receiving the appeal request from the Registrar.

### D) APPEAL OUTCOMES

8.12 Following their review of the case, the designated member of staff is empowered to make one of the following decisions:

- a) That the academic misconduct appeal request is upheld, in which case they will be empowered to take one of the following courses of action:
  - i. Overturn the Stage 2 outcome and require the ACP to revise their decision and associated penalty and, where appropriate, issue an apology to the student as appropriate.
  - ii. Refer the case back to Stage 2 for reconsideration and, where appropriate, issue an apology to the student as appropriate.
- b) That the academic appeal request is not upheld, in which case the Stage 2 outcome remains unchanged and is final.

8.13 The decision of the designated member of staff who has undertaken the review is final.



- 8.14 The Registrar will inform the student of the outcome of the appeal in writing, including an explanation for the outcome, and inform them of any next steps to be taken as appropriate within these procedures.
- 8.15 Where the review outcome refers the case back to Stage 2 for reconsideration, the ACP will be convened to reconsider the case, which shall, where practicable, be concluded as soon as possible, and within at least 10 working days.
- 8.16 Where the review outcome requires a Board of Examiners to revise their decision, the Registrar will follow the process set out in Section 9.
- 8.17 The Registrar will issue the student with a Completion of Procedures letter as set out in Section 10.

## 9. IMPLEMENTATION OF ACADEMIC DISCIPLINE DECISIONS

- 9.1 The decision of the ACP will be implemented and noted by the Board of Examiners, and if the case against the student is not upheld, the Board of Examiners will be so advised, and the students work will be assessed and recorded in the normal way.
- 9.2 The Chair of the Board of Examiners may take Chair's action in confirming the decision, where the Examination Board is not due to be reconvened within a reasonable time scale. Such actions will be homologated at the next formal meeting of the Board.
- 9.3 Prior to its next meeting, the Student Attendance and Retention Group must be formally notified, through the Examination Boards, of all students having been considered, or in the process of being considered, for academic offences.
- 9.4 The decision of the ACPs will be retained centrally by the Academic Registry to ensure consistency of approach and to provide a detailed record for purposes of internal monitoring of the incidences of academic offences, for tracking incidences for any individual and for the provision of data to external agencies as appropriate.
- 9.5 Neither the ACP nor the designated member of staff appointed to review the academic discipline appeal at Stage 3 have authority to revise an academic decision of a Board of Examiners. Most ACP decisions and appeals will be resolved prior to the end of year Board of Examiners meetings and will be reported in the normal way.
- 9.6 Where a Stage 2 or Stage 3 decision requires a Board of Examiners to revise its decision that has already been made regarding a grade, the Registrar will convene an Extraordinary Board of Examiners meeting, which must include the relevant External Examiners to formally reconsider and revise its decision. A meeting of the Board of Examiners will not usually be necessarily in cases where a student will be offered another opportunity to retake an assessment.
- 9.7 The revised decision of a Board of Examiners resulting from this process shall be final.



## 10. COMPLETION OF PROCEDURES LETTERS

- 10.1 A Completion of Procedures letter will be issued to a student by the Registrar when:
- The student's academic appeal has been rejected at Stage 3 because it has not met the grounds for appeal; or
  - Stage 3 of these procedures has been concluded.
  - The student requests a Completion of Procedures letter at any other stage of the process.
- 10.2 In all cases the Completion of Procedures letter will be issued to the student within 28 days.
- 10.3 Where a Completion of Procedures Letter is issued it should contain the following in clear language as appropriate:
- The Stage 2 or Stage 3 outcome decision.
  - The reason(s) for the Stage 2 or Stage 3 outcome decision.
  - A statement that the student has not completed the UCO's internal processes if the letter is issued prior to proceeding to Stage 3.
  - A statement that the student has exhausted the UCO's procedures relating to this case.
  - The student's right to submit a complaint to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator within 12 months of the date of the Completion of Procedures Letter.
  - That the student may seek support from the [Student Support Team](#).

## 11. REFERRAL TO THE OFFICE OF THE INDEPENDENT ADJUDICATOR (OIA)

- 11.1 Where the student has exhausted the UCO's procedures relating to their case following a Stage 3 outcome decision the student will be issued a "Completion of Procedures Letter" as set out in Section 10 and will have the right to refer the case to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) (<https://www.oiahe.org.uk/>) within 12 months.

## APPENDIX 1: GUIDANCE ON ACADEMIC PRACTICE

### 1. GOOD ACADEMIC PRACTICE

1.1 Good academic practice is the use of ideas, research findings and text by a learner in ways that recognise where these represent the knowledge of others. It is important because it enables learners:

- a) To demonstrate their breadth of reading by identifying and comparing their sources of information;
- b) To demonstrate an individual understanding of their findings as they learn, by using their words to describe and interpret the ideas of others;
- c) To develop their own originality by synthesising, commenting on and structuring their argument around the contributions of others;
- d) To apply their reading and their understanding to a range of subjects and situations in ways that makes clear their process and their conclusions.

1.2 To do this, learners are required to:

- a) Recognise the origins of ideas and of statements, where these are not theirs, to recognise the difference between the two, and to deal with each appropriately within their own work;
- b) Report accurately the findings of their research (primary and secondary);
- c) Submit work for assessment that represents their individual and independent effort unless otherwise advised in the assessment brief.
- d) Doing this is good academic practice.

1.3 Referencing systems are used to identify where a writer is using the ideas and words of others. They ensure that both writer and reader are able to distinguish accurately between a learner's own ideas, their interpretation of the ideas and words of others, and their direct use of the ideas and words of others in their own work. The UCO uses the Harvard Referencing Guide and [guides](#) on how to apply this in written work are provided on Bone.

### 2. ACADEMIC PRACTICE AND LEARNING

2.1 The UCO encourages its learners to demonstrate their reading and their research by making appropriate reference in their work to the ideas and words of others.

2.2 It requires learners to use a referencing system (usually the Harvard referencing system), and it expects learners to use this system fully and accurately as a way of making clear to readers where the ideas and words of others have been used.

2.3 It recognises that learners need to develop their use of referencing systems as part of their learning process, within the subject area(s) they are studying.

- 2.4 It also recognises that the importance of acknowledging the ideas and words of others as a requirement of good academic practice is new to some of its learners.
- 2.5 In this context, the UCO outlines the responsibilities of Course Leaders and learners as follows.

### 3. THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF COURSE LEADERS

- 3.1 To provide induction activities and written guidance at induction on a) good academic practice, and b) the use of referencing, recognising the distinction between the two, and the differing needs of different student groups in respect of each.
- 3.2 To provide further course-based support, at each stage of study and prior to the first submission deadline at that stage, that demonstrates and practises good academic practice and referencing.
- 3.3 To make sure unit assessment tasks make appropriate reference to the importance and the significance of good academic practice and referencing, in the context of this policy.
- 3.4 To ensure that all staff engaged in teaching and assessment have subject expertise sufficient to the task of identifying issues in learners' academic practice arising in relation to the core knowledge basis in that subject.
- 3.5 To ensure that all staff engaged in teaching and assessment are informed of and make appropriate use of this policy and the processes underpinning its operation.
- 3.6 To be vigilant, as individual markers and moderators, in identifying potential academic offences and in applying this policy to all learners.
- 3.7 To provide additional support, including referral to other teams (e.g. in Learning Resources and Student Support) where the application of this policy indicates that students have not used referencing systems correctly and/or have submitted work demonstrating bad academic practice.
- 3.8 To ensure that visiting lecturers are fully briefed and trained to fulfil their responsibilities.

### 4. THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF LEARNERS

- 4.1 To identify accurately where they have used in their work the words and/or ideas of others.
- 4.2 To use referencing systems accurately in that identification.
- 4.3 To avoid practices that may give rise to academic concern and/or suspicion of academic offence.
- 4.4 To read this policy, and to attend and make use of the guidance and support offered at induction (or the additional/replacement guidance and support sessions offered for late-arriving students).
- 4.5 To make use of the further guidance and support offered at each study stage in advance of the first deadline for submitted work.

- 4.6 To seek assistance if they are, for any reason, unable to take advantage of the standard guidance and support offered.

**APPENDIX 2: ACADEMIC CONCERN / OFFENCE FORM**

Student Name:	
Student Number:	
Course Registration Date:	
Submission Date:	
Unit name:	
Course name:	
Please Indicate if Referral work:	
If work has been marked – grade given:	
Assessment (title and task, please attach assignment brief and weighting if applicable):	
A) Potential Academic Offence (Please tick one box in either A or B, unless multiple offences):	
Cheating (in an exam)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Impersonation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fabrication	<input type="checkbox"/>
Collusion	<input type="checkbox"/>
B) Academic Concern/Offence (Please consult Academic Discipline Policy and Procedure for guidance on academic practice and plagiarism)	
Use of the ideas and/or words of others and of attribution that is incomplete and/or inaccurate (can be dealt with as concern)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Unattributed use of the ideas and/or words of others (can be dealt with as concern)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Evidence of attempt to mislead or evade (includes where student is suspected of not writing own work) (send to ACP)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Form completed by:	
Date:	
Position:	
Contact Number:	Telephone

Previous Offence Information							
No Previous Offences	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Previous Academic Concern	<input type="checkbox"/>	Term:		Unit:		Ac Yr:	
Previous ACP case	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ref:		Unit:		Ac Yr:	
Signature (Course Leader):							
Name:							
Date:							

Case to be dealt with as:

Academic Concern (dealt with and recorded by the Academic Registry)

Academic Offence (send to ACP)

Confirmed by (Unit Leader):

Date:

### Academic Offence Case Confirmation

(To be completed by the Unit Leader where case is referred to ACP)

Name:

Date:

If this is determined to be an Academic Offence, this form and associated documentation should be forwarded to the Registrar to go to the Academic Conduct Panel, along with a description of the evidence for the offence and with all relevant documentation attached to this form. A note (and other evidence where available) should also be provided of induction and support provided for or made available to the student in respect of academic offences and good academic practice.

Outline of the case to be referred to ACP:

NB. To go to the ACP, this form must include an evaluation of evidence; a Turnitin printout is not sufficient but can be supplied as supporting evidence.

**For official purposes**

Received by Registrar:

ACP Ref:

ACP meeting date:

ACP outcome:

Any additional information required?



### APPENDIX 3: ACADEMIC DISCIPLINE APPEAL REQUEST FORM

<p>Form Guidance:</p> <p>This form should only be used to make an appeal against an Academic Discipline decision made at Stage 2 by the Academic Conduct Panel (ACP).</p> <p>The student concerned should complete this form and send this to the Registrar within 10 working days of receiving written notification of an academic misconduct decision; appeals received after this time will not be considered.</p> <p>The student should attach any evidence supporting and submit this at the same time they submit this appeal form to the Registrar.</p>	
Student Name:	
Email Address:	
Course:	
Registration (Intake) Year:	
Which unit and assessment does this appeal relate to?	
<p>What are your grounds for appeal? Please check (X) the relevant box:</p>	
The academic misconduct procedures were not followed properly.	
The decision of the ACP was unreasonable considering the evidence presented.	
I have new and relevant material evidence or information that I was unable, for valid reasons, to provide earlier in the process.	
There was bias or reasonable perception of bias during the procedure.	
The penalty imposed was disproportionate, or not permitted under the procedures.	
<p>What outcome are you seeking?</p>	
<p>Please provide a supporting statement to explain the reasons for your appeal and why you think the academic misconduct decision should be changed.</p>	
<p>What evidence have you submitted in support of your appeal?</p> <p>Please note that all evidence must be genuine – any evidence that is found to be fraudulent will be considered a serious offence and referred to the Student Code of Conduct &amp; Disciplinary Procedures.</p>	

<b>Disability, Specific Learning Difficulties or Long-term Health Conditions</b>	
<p><b>Are you Disabled or do you have a Specific Learning Difficulty (such as Dyslexia) or a long-term health condition that you believe is relevant to your appeal?</b></p> <p><b>(Please select (X) the relevant option.)</b></p>	
	<b>No, I do not.</b>
	<b>Yes, I do</b>
<b>If you have selected “Yes, I do” please give further details below:</b>	
<b>Declaration – Please read and sign before submitting this form:</b>	
<p>By submitting this form, you agree to the following:</p> <p>1. Privacy Notice</p> <p>The University College of Osteopathy (UCO) is the Data Controller in respect of the personal data you provide via this form. The UCO is registered as a Data Controller with the Information Commissioner’s Office (ICO) and manages personal data in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the UCO’s Data Protection Policy. The UCO will use the data you provide to investigate your appeal. The content of your appeal will be shared with relevant UCO staff as appropriate to facilitate this investigation.</p> <p>Your appeal data will be retained by the UCO until the conclusion of your studied plus 6 years. The data will be stored securely by the UCO and will not be shared with any third parties; the exception being if you refer a matter to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator, there may be a need to share personal data with them to respond accordingly. If you have any queries about this privacy notice or the processing of your personal data in managing the appeal process, please contact the Registrar: E-mail: <a href="mailto:Registry@uco.ac.uk">Registry@uco.ac.uk</a>. For further information about the processing of your personal data by the UCO and your data subject rights please see the Student Privacy Notice.</p> <p>2. False Claims</p> <p>Submission of false or fraudulent documentation is an offence and will be dealt with under the UCO’s Student Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures. The UCO reserves the right to check on the validity of the document(s) submitted by contacting the third party directly.</p>	
<b>Your Name:</b>	
<b>Date:</b>	
<p>Please submit your completed form to the Registrar with any evidence to support your appeal attached.</p> <p>If you require assistance or guidance to complete this form, please contact <a href="mailto:studentsupport@uco.ac.uk">studentsupport@uco.ac.uk</a>.</p>	

**CORE DOCUMENTATION RECORD PAGE**

**Academic Discipline Policy & Procedures**

<b>Version number</b>	<b>Dates produced and approved (include committee)</b>	<b>Reason for production/ revision</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Location(s)</b>	<b>Proposed next review date and approval required</b>
V1.0	Nov 2011 Academic Council	Update from 2010-2011 regulations.	Registrar	All master versions will be held in: J:\0 Quality Team - Core Documentation Intranet	Nov 2012
V2.0	Aug 2012 Aug 2013 Aug 2014	Annual Review No Changes	Registrar	All master versions will be held in: J:\0 Quality Team - Core Documentation Intranet	Aug 2013 Aug 2015
V3.0	Apr 2015 PRAG Chair	Administrative amendment to reflect current role titles	Registrar	All master versions will be held in: J:\0 Quality Team - Core Documentation Intranet	Apr 2016
V4.0	Sep 2016 Academic Council	Minor changes to reflect current practice	Registrar	All master versions will be held in: J:\0 Quality Team - Core Documentation Intranet	Sep 2018
V5.0	Jul 2017 PRAG Chair	Administrative Amendment to update institution name change from British School of Osteopathy to University College of Osteopathy.	Registrar	All master versions will be held in: J:\0 Quality Team - Core Documentation Intranet	Sep 2018
V6.0	May 2018 PRAG Chair	Administrative Amendments to reflect title changes (i.e. from Principal to Vice-Chancellor, etc.)	Registrar	All master versions will be held in: J:\0 Quality Team - Core Documentation Intranet	Sep 2018
V7.0	Dec 2019 PRAG Chair	Administrative Amendments to reflect the new committees' structure	Registrar	All master versions will be held in: J:\0 Quality Team - Core Documentation Intranet	2019-2020

V8.0	Jul 2022 Academic Council	Major Amendments to align to OIA guidance.	Registrar	All master versions will be held in: J:\0 Quality Team - Core Documentation Website	Jul 2025
<b>Equality Impact</b>					
Positive equality impact (i.e. the policy/procedure/guideline significantly reduces inequalities)					
Neutral equality impact (i.e. no significant effect)					X
Negative equality impact (i.e. increasing inequalities)					
<b>If you have any feedback or suggestions for enhancing this policy, please email your comments to: <a href="mailto:quality@uco.ac.uk">quality@uco.ac.uk</a></b>					