

## ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT in RESEARCH DEGREES

<b>Prepared By</b>	Department of Governance
<b>Approved By</b>	Senate 1 June 2018
<b>Source Location</b>	<a href="https://edshare.gcu.ac.uk/4180/">https://edshare.gcu.ac.uk/4180/</a>
<b>Published Location</b>	<a href="https://www.gcu.ac.uk/gaq/complaintsstudentconduct/">https://www.gcu.ac.uk/gaq/complaintsstudentconduct/</a>
<b>Other documents referenced</b>	Code of Student Conduct
<b>Related documents</b>	Regulations for the Award of Research Degrees (MPhil, PhD, Prof D) Code of Student Conduct Code of Good Practice for Researchers

<b>Version Number</b>	<b>Date issued</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Update information</b>
V1.0	September 2018	Department of Governance	First Published version (previously was a section of the Regulations for the Award of Award of The University's Research Degrees).



<b>ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT in RESEARCH DEGREES (including plagiarism, ghost writing or other academic misconduct)</b>	
1.1	The stages at which an academic irregularity may be detected are as follows:
	1.1.1 At the confirmation stage (RDC2)
	1.1.2 Stage 1 of the examination process during the reading of the thesis/portfolio by the examiner
	1.1.3 During the viva-voce examination
	1.1.4 Subsequent to the examination and/or award of the research degree
1.2	In the event of an academic irregularity being alleged at any of the above stages, the person who discovers the alleged irregularity must inform the Department of Governance in writing and include the evidence which forms the basis of the allegation.
1.3	The Department of Governance must notify the following: Chair to Research Degrees Committee (RDC), all relevant supervisors, the Head of Department, Dean of School, Associate Dean Research and Senior Postgraduate Research Tutor.
1.4	Where an allegation of an academic irregularity has been made at the confirmation stage (Paragraph 1.1.1), the Dean of School (or nominee as agreed with the Chair of RDC) will investigate whether an academic irregularity has occurred and submit a written report to the Research Degrees Committee via the Department of Governance.
1.5	Where no academic irregularity is found, the Dean will communicate this outcome to the Chair to RDC and the Department of Governance. The Chair shall inform the complainant and the student of the outcome of the investigation.
1.6	Where an academic irregularity is deemed to have occurred the Dean of School will produce a written report of the investigation detailing whether minor or major offences have occurred and submit this to the RDC.
1.7	Where a minor academic irregularity is admitted by the student, the report should include details of any disciplinary action taken.
1.8	Where an allegation of minor academic irregularity is not admitted by the student, the Dean of School will decide the appropriate action to be taken on the basis of the findings of the investigation and include these details in their report. <sup>1</sup>
1.9	Should the student not accept the findings of the Dean of School's (or nominee) investigations they have the right to request that an Academic Investigating Panel (see 1.11) be set up to consider the case.
	1.9.1 This right must be exercised within ten working days of the student being informed of the findings of the Dean's investigation.
1.10	In the case of alleged offences of major academic irregularity, an Academic Investigating Panel must be established. This panel shall be comprised of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Chair to the RDC (or nominated RDC member if the Chair is from the student's School) - Chair</li> <li>• two members of the RDC (who must not be from the student's School)</li> <li>• Secretary to RDC - Clerk</li> </ul>
1.11	The Academic Investigating Panel shall be convened by the Secretary to RDC as soon as is reasonably practicable and normally no later than 20 working days from the date on which the matter is referred.
1.12	The student shall be informed of the allegations and of his/her right to appear before the Panel accompanied by a by a Student Adviser from GCU Students' Association, a relative, fellow student, or a member of University staff and to submit a written statement concerning the alleged irregularity. The person accompanying the student will be able to

<sup>1</sup> See Code of Student Conduct 9.6.1 for definitions of plagiarism and 9.7 for a definition of ghost writing

	make submissions and ask questions on behalf of the student but is not allowed to answer questions on behalf of the student. Normally, a student may be accompanied by one person.
1.13	The Secretary to RDC will keep the student informed of the timescales. At least 7 working days prior to the hearing the Secretary to RDC will notify the student and the members of the Academic Investigating Panel of the date and time of the meeting. The student shall be provided by the Secretary with full details of the alleged irregularity.
1.14	At least 5 working days prior to the hearing the student must (if applicable) inform the Clerk to the Panel of the name of an accompanying person.
1.15	Failure by the student to appear before the Panel or to submit a statement shall not prevent the investigation proceeding.
1.16	The Panel may call witnesses, as appropriate, to substantiate the allegations. The Panel shall interview the student, staff and witnesses, as appropriate, shall consider the student's written statement and shall come to a decision on the basis of the student's statement and the supporting evidence. If it is reasonable to do so, the student may be informed of the decision of the Panel at the meeting. Normally, however, the Department of Governance will inform the student in writing of the Committee's decision no later than 10 working days after the hearing.
1.17	In the event of an academic irregularity being suspected at the stage described in paragraphs 1.1.2 or 1.1.3, the examiner should halt the proceedings at that stage and inform the Secretary to RDC as described in paragraph 1.2. The examiner should not attempt at this stage, to determine whether an academic irregularity has taken place.
1.18	In the event of an academic irregularity being suspected at the stage described in paragraphs 1.1.4, the allegation and any evidence provided should be sent to the Department of Governance by the person in the University who received the allegation.
1.19	In the event of an academic irregularity being suspected at the stage described in paragraphs 1.1.2, 1.1.3 or 1.1.4 an Academic Investigating Panel must be established as described in paragraph 1.10.
1.20	The Academic Investigating Panel must be established within 10 working days of receipt of the allegation.
1.21	In the case of academic irregularity being suspected at the stage described in paragraph 1.1.4, the original team of examiners shall be reconvened to consider the implications including whether the student should be deprived of the research degree awarded. If it is not possible for the original examining team to be reconvened then the report of the findings of the Academic Investigating Panel shall be referred to the Senate for consideration.
<b>Grounds for Appeal</b>	
1.22	An appeal may be made on the following grounds: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. evidence becomes available which was not available, or could not reasonably have been made available, at the time of the original decision;</li> <li>ii. the decision was unreasonable in the light of the evidence submitted by the student, and/or the sanction was unduly harsh;</li> <li>iii. there was a procedural irregularity which was prejudicial to the student.</li> </ul>
1.23	A student may lodge an appeal in respect of the decision of the Dean or Academic Investigating Panel to uphold the allegation(s) in whole or in part, or in respect of any sanction(s) imposed. An appeal must be lodged with the Department of Governance within 20 working days of the issue of the written decision.
1.24	The student should provide any written documentation, witness statements or written submissions that they intend to use at the appeal hearing at the same time as they lodge the appeal.
1.25	The appeal will be considered by a Panel comprising the PVC Research and will (normally)

	comprise of a Dean from another School and a member of the Professoriate.
1.26	The Department of Governance will arrange a hearing of the Appeals Panel as soon as is practicable and normally no later than 20 working days after the appeal has been received.
1.27	At least 10 working days prior to the hearing, the Clerk to the Appeal Panel will notify the student of the date and time of the meeting.
1.28	At least 5 working days prior to the hearing the student must (if applicable) inform the Clerk to the Panel of the name of an accompanying person.
1.29	If it is reasonable to do so, the student may be informed of the decision of the Appeals Panel at the meeting. Normally, however, the Department of Governance will inform the student in writing of the Committee's decision no later than 10 working days after the hearing.