

About the Academic Conduct Policy

An alternative format of this summary is available. Please contact the Student Support team via [Contact Us](#) (phone +44 (0)300 303 5303), or via [StudentHome](#) if you are a current Open University student.

This summary was written alongside the main policy to offer a short introduction. Support from our advisers is available so please [Contact Us](#) to discuss this. Welsh-speaking Students and Learners may speak with a student support adviser in Welsh on +44 (0) 29 2047 1170.

The [Academic Conduct Policy](#) sets out The Open University's commitment to maintaining high standards of academic integrity and fairness across all assessments. It defines what constitutes academic misconduct such as plagiarism, collusion, contract cheating, falsification, and unauthorised use of generative AI, and explains the procedures for identifying and addressing such behaviour. By promoting good academic practice and compliance with national quality standards, the policy safeguards the value of OU degrees and ensures that all students are assessed equitably.

We will follow these principles

- Encourage you to adopt good academic practices through teaching, guidance, and support embedded in modules and resources.
- Maintain clear expectations so that all students are assessed equitably and no one gains an unfair advantage.
- Comply with the Office for Students (OfS) conditions and the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) Quality Code to safeguard the value of OU qualifications.
- Provide resources and tutor support to help students understand referencing, attribution, and independent work.

- Actively prevent and address plagiarism, collusion, contract cheating, falsification, and unauthorised use of generative AI or automated tools.
- Investigate suspected misconduct fairly and apply penalties consistently, with opportunities for appeal.
- Encourage a culture of transparency and responsibility in academic work across the OU community.

You need to be aware

- All assignments and assessments should be written in your own words and reflect your independent understanding.
- Always credit sources accurately using the required referencing style to avoid plagiarism.
- Copying, sharing answers, or working together on individual tasks is considered misconduct.
- Do not pay or ask others to complete your work and avoid using essay mills or similar services.
- Using AI tools without explicit permission is considered academic misconduct.
- Do not fabricate data, references, or any part of your work.
- Use OU resources and tutor guidance to understand academic integrity and good practice.
- Misconduct can lead to penalties, including loss of marks or disciplinary action.
- Be transparent about your work and follow OU guidelines to maintain fairness and integrity.

Your data / key compliance section

The Student Privacy Notice provides you with details of how The Open University uses your personal data.

How to question a decision made under this policy

For information about how to appeal against a decision made under this policy please refer to the [Complaints and Appeals Procedure](#). Please [Contact Us](#) for support.

Give Us Your Feedback

If you have any comments about this policy summary document and how it might be improved, please share this with us, by emailing SPR-Policy-Team@open.ac.uk.

Charity Statement

The Open University is incorporated by Royal Charter (RC 000391), an exempt charity in England and Wales and a charity registered in Scotland (SC 038302). The Open University is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority in relation to its secondary activity of credit broking.

Document Information

Short summary for Academic Conduct Policy: effective from January 2026

Approved by: Director, Tuition, Assessment, Credit and Qualifications (TACQ),
Academic Service

Date for review: November 2026