

OFFENCES

Academic misconduct is broadly understood to mean offences against the academic integrity of the learning environment.

Below are descriptions of academic offences. It is important to note that, while the University has attempted to present as comprehensive a list as possible, this list of potential academic offences should not be considered exhaustive. Students are responsible for knowing what constitutes an academic offence and faculty members have a responsibility to provide students, early in their course or program, with information about academic integrity that might be particular to their discipline. An offence may be deemed to have been committed whether the student knew a particular action was an offence or ought reasonably to have known. Whether or not a student intended to commit academic misconduct is not relevant for a finding of guilt. Hurried or careless submission of assignments does not excuse students from responsibility for verifying the academic integrity of their work before submitting it. Students who are in any doubt as to whether an action on their part could be construed as an academic offence should consult with a faculty member or faculty advisor.

It is the responsibility of students working in a group to take all reasonable steps to ensure that work submitted to the group by individual members has not been completed in a way that violates this policy.

Further, as some academic offences may also be viewed as violations of policies on Misconduct in Research and Scholarship, the Student Rights and Responsibilities regulations, the criminal code and/or civil statutes, students may also be subject to procedures and penalties outlined in those policies at the University's discretion, and to criminal prosecution or civil action.

A graduate of the University may be charged with an academic offence committed while they were a registered student when, in the opinion of the dean, the offense, if detected, would have resulted in a sanction sufficiently severe that the degree would not have been granted at the time that it was.

1. Misappropriation of Other's Work

1. Plagiarism

Plagiarism is misrepresenting the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one's own. It includes reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else's published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and representing these as one's own thinking by not acknowledging the appropriate source or by the failure to use appropriate quotation marks. In addition to books, articles, papers and other written works, material may include (but is not limited to): literary compositions and phrases, performance compositions, chemical compounds, art works, laboratory reports, research results, calculations and the results of calculations, diagrams, constructions, computer reports, computer code/ software, and material on the internet. Some examples of plagiarism include:

- submission of a take-home examination, essay, laboratory report or other assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else;
- using direct, verbatim quotations, paraphrased material, algorithms, formulae, scientific or mathematical concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- using another's data or research findings;
- buying or selling term papers or assignments;

- submitting a computer program developed in whole or in part by someone else, with or without modifications, as one's own;

Students have the responsibility to learn and use the conventions of documentation suitable to the discipline, and are encouraged to consult with the instructor of the course, the academic supervisor, or the department chair for clarification if needed. Instructors should include in the materials they provide to students about academic integrity, information about any unique, discipline-specific understandings with respect to what must be acknowledged or cited¹.

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In addition to being concerned about appropriate citation, students who wish to use the work of others, from any source, should be aware of copyright laws and other conventions governing intellectual property. See the Office of Research website, <https://www.uoguelph.ca/research/documents/> for links to the University's intellectual property policies.

2. Copying

Copying is similar to plagiarism in that it involves the appropriation of others' work as one's own. It includes copying in whole or in part another's test or examination answer(s), laboratory report, essay, or other assignment.

Copying also includes submitting the same work, research or assignment for credit on more than one occasion in two or more courses, or in the same course, without the prior written permission of the instructor(s) in all courses involved (including courses taken at other post-secondary institutions).

3. Unauthorized Co-operation or Collaboration

It is an offence to co-operate or collaborate in the completion of an academic assignment, in whole or in part, when the instructor has indicated that the assignment is to be completed on an individual basis.

2. Misrepresentation and Fraud

This category of offences covers a range of unacceptable activities, including the following:

1. Impersonation

Impersonation involves having someone impersonate oneself, either in person or electronically, in class, in an examination or in connection with any type of academic requirement, course assignment or material, or of availing oneself of the results of such impersonation. Both the impersonator and the individual impersonated (if aware of the impersonation) are subject to disciplinary proceedings under this policy.

2. Falsification

It is an offence to submit or present false or fraudulent assignments, research, credentials, or other documents for any academic purpose. This includes, but is not limited to:

- falsified research or lab results and data;
- concocting facts or reference;
- false medical or compassionate certificates;
- false letters of support or other letters of reference;
- falsified academic records, transcripts or other registrarial records;
- fraudulent submission practices (e.g., altering date stamps);
- altering graded work for resubmission.

It is also falsification to misrepresent the amount of work an individual has contributed to a group assignment or activity. Both the individual to whom work is falsely attributed and those who acquiesce in its attribution commit an academic offence.

3. Withholding

It is an offence to withhold records, transcripts or other academic documents with the intent to mislead or gain unfair academic advantage.

4. Unauthorized Aids and Assistance

It is an offence to use or possess an unauthorized aid, to use or obtain unauthorized assistance, or to use or obtain prohibited material in any academic examination or term test or in connection with any other form of academic work. Such aids or material may include, but are not limited to, specific documents, electronic equipment or devices, and commercial services (such as writing, editorial, software, or research survey services). Students should assume that any such aid is prohibited unless they are specifically advised otherwise by the instructor or invigilator. Note that unauthorized assistance does not include student support services offered by the University, such as the Learning Commons.

3. Improper Access and Obstruction

1. Preventing Access to Materials

It is an offence to alter, destroy, hide, remove without authorization, or in any other way improperly restrict access to library, electronic or other materials intended for general academic use.

2. Obstruction and Interference

It is an offence to obstruct or otherwise interfere with the scholarly activities of another, or to alter or falsify the work of others, in order to gain unfair academic advantage. This includes, but is not limited to, deleting data or files, interfering or tampering with experimental data, with a human or animal subject, with a written or other creation (for example, a painting, a sculpture, a film), with a chemical used for research, or with any other object of study or research device.

3. Improper Access

It is an offence to improperly obtain through theft, bribery, collusion, or otherwise access to confidential information, examinations or test questions or to gain undue academic advantage as a result of such behaviour.

4. Improper Dissemination

It is an offence to publish, disseminate or otherwise make public to a third party without prior written consent, confidential information. Confidential information includes but is not limited to academic information, data or documents which are not otherwise publicly available and which have been gathered or held with a reasonable expectation of confidentiality.

4. Aiding and Abetting

Knowingly aiding or abetting anyone in committing any form of academic misconduct is itself academic misconduct and subject to this policy.