

## **APPENDIX 4- Guidance on the provision of evidence**

The relevant sections of the guidance below should be utilised by programme team members and students who are asked to provide evidence and/ or statements for consideration at preliminary consideration stage or for an Academic Offences Panel or Board.

### **1. Guidance for Programme Teams**

#### **General guidance**

The programme team should endeavour to ensure the evidence provided is transparent and detailed to provide a useful overview of the suspected academic offence.

Evidence should be 'frozen' in time – online evidence can change so simply providing links isn't sufficient. Evidence extracted from websites should be provided either as PDF or screen-shot files.

The timing of submission of evidence is vital to ensure that the Panel or Board can be held within the 20 day timeline. Programme teams should endeavour to have all evidence submitted to the relevant support team directly after the outcome of the preliminary consideration.

#### **Evidence for the Preliminary Consideration stage**

Evidence considered at the preliminary meeting should be as comprehensive as possible. A suspected academic offence may have come to light through a variety of means including plagiarism detection software. Where this is the case, additional supporting evidence should be sourced to support this.

#### Evidence should never be solely based on plagiarism detection software.

Where it is suspected that plagiarism may have been committed it may not always be possible to find the source document. It is important not to rely on the headline score from Turnitin for example; a small match of 3% could be significant plagiarism, a large match of 30% could be fine in some circumstances. Learning Technologists can support the interpretation of Turnitin reports as required.

Therefore evidence may include (but is not limited to) the following documentation:

- A plagiarism detection software report (this needs to be scrutinised and not taken at face value);
- Any documentation that supports the plagiarism detection software report (e.g. details/ extracts of the source materials);
- Excerpts of the student's work identifying changing writing styles through the work;
- Examples of a student's work where the writing style is different from other work already submitted;
- A similar assignment submitted by another student
- Unit Guide
- Assessment Brief
- Information relating to the student profile/ previous Academic Offences

The student does not attend the preliminary stage meeting as standard. However, there may be exceptional instances where further evidence is required in order to enable the decision as to whether to progress under *6H - Academic Offences: Policy and Procedure for Taught Awards*. In such exceptional instances, a student may be called upon and invited to attend a meeting to inform a preliminary investigation. The discussion should be carefully recorded and the student must be briefed in advance that concerns have been raised regarding a particular piece of work and that this may lead to invoking of this Policy and Procedure. The formal notes from this meeting will then go as evidence to the preliminary stage meeting.

As part of the preliminary consideration attendees may suggest that additional evidence is collated prior to the case being sent to either Faculty Academic Offence Panel or University Academic Offence Board.

#### **Evidence for the Faculty Academic Offence Panel / University Academic Offence Board**

All Panels and Boards should be convened to take place within 20 working days of the outcome of the preliminary consideration. Documentation will be circulated at least 5 working days prior to the Panel or Board and it is therefore essential that all documentation is provided by programme teams as soon as the outcome of the preliminary

consideration is known. Where the preliminary consideration identifies that additional evidence is required this should be provided at least ten working days before the date of the Panel or Board.

The following evidence should be submitted as standard when requesting consideration of a suspected offence via a Faculty Academic Offence Panel or University Academic Offence Board:

- Notes of Preliminary Consideration meeting
- Any evidence submitted to the Preliminary Consideration stage that is deemed appropriate to the case
- Complete annotated assessment, excluding any mark and any feedback to the student
- Electronic copy of the assessment under consideration (if required)
- Evidence to support the claim (e.g. website copies of source material)
- Unit Guide
- Assessment Brief
- Witness Statements (where applicable)

## 2. Guidance for Students

### General Guidance

Advice and support in relation to suspected academic offences can be sought from SUBU advice (<http://www.subu.org.uk/advice>) via email [subuadvice@bournemouth.ac.uk](mailto:subuadvice@bournemouth.ac.uk) or telephone (01202) 965779. Students are encouraged to engage with SUBU advice as early as possible.

Students will receive notification of the date of the Panel or Board which will consider the suspected case at least ten working days before the Panel or Board is due to meet. This communication will normally be made via email to the Student's BU email address. It is the responsibility of students to ensure that they check their BU email address for confirmation of dates and arrangements.

At this point students will be asked if they wish to provide a written statement in defence of the case being considered.

Students should be aware that if they decline to submit a written statement before the Chair of the Panel or Board confirms that no further evidence can be presented, they cannot submit further information for consideration after the outcome has been confirmed; neither will further evidence be considered in support of an Appeal.

### Student Submission of Evidence

Students may submit any supporting evidence alongside their written statement to the Panel/Board. It is important that the statement and any additional evidence are submitted in a timely manner prior to the Panel/Board convening and in accordance with the instructions provided in the aforementioned communication regarding the date. As documentation is normally circulated to all relevant attendees no later than 5 working days prior to the Panel or Board the deadline for submission will usually be at least 6 working days prior to the date of the Panel or Board.

Students who wish to raise exceptional circumstances in support of their case should make reference to this within their statement. As outlined within the Academic Offences Policy and Procedure (section 8.17):

*In accordance with 6J – Exceptional Circumstances Including Extensions: Policy and Procedure: if a student has not informed the University of their circumstances at the appropriate time (i.e. via extension request, Assessment Board consideration or in advance of or at an Academic Offences Panel or Board hearing) **the circumstances will not be considered unless the student provides evidence of valid reasons for not doing so previously.***

In such cases students may wish to supply evidence to support the valid reason for not having submitted their circumstances and are reminded to ensure that they submit in line with 6J – *Exceptional Circumstances Including Extensions: Policy and Procedure* as soon as possible.

Students are reminded that **exceptional circumstances will not be considered as grounds for excusing an academic offence.**