Skills for Learning | Case Studies

Help your students to understand and avoid academic misconduct

AIMS

- To help students understand academic misconduct and the associated penalites
- To reduce the number of referrals under the Academic Misconduct Procedure
- To help academics identify areas in need of further development or guidance

DATA

- Between March and July 2017, 560 students have accessed the eLearning
- 103 students have completed the test with an average score of 96%
- 94% of students who completed the feedback said that the content was useful
- It is currently embedded in 18 modules within Blackboard.

The University of Salford Students' Union is keen to look at new and innovative methods for reminding and reinforcing the messages around academic good practice. Interactive and engaging content is now available for embedding in Blackboard module and programme sites. This will allow students to engage with the content at any time and complete a short quiz to test their knowledge. It is hoped that this innovative method will improve the level of understanding within the student body.

Rhiannon Roberts
Director of Strategy and Culture, USSU

Richard Clemens
Assistant Quality and Enhancement Manager

This material clearly sets out what academic misconduct is and its implications. Through hearing cases we regularly find that students, and some staff, do not have a clear understanding of all aspects of issues such as plagiarism, self-plagiarism and collusion. This material provides a consistent message which ties in with the University procedures and which, in conjunction with discipline specific support in the school, will hopefully reduce the number of students that have to have cases heard.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Direct students to the material in assignment briefs
- Set a completion deadline
- Direct students to other related content on the Skills for Learning website, 'Introduction to Referencing', 'Avoid Plagiarism and Get Better Marks' for example.

The University and the Students' Union work hard to disseminate the principles of academic good conduct. It is also why the university has an Academic Misconduct Procedure, to investigate possible cases of misconduct and take appropriate action. A finding of academic misconduct can have serious consequences for a student's academic

Professor Chris Birkbeck
Academic Lead, Student Disciplinary Panel

career and in some cases for their professional career as well. I strongly encourage you to use the eLearning resources and the Academic Misconduct Quiz on Blackboard to help your students understand and uphold the academic principles to which we all subscribe.

We developed the 'Academic and essay writing mistakes that can cost you' eLearning in collaboration with the Students Union and the Quality and Enhancement Office. The course covers the 7 types of academic misconduct that are recognised by the University and the accompanying test gives students the opportunity to check their understanding. The test scores are stored in the students' grade centre in Blackboard helping you to identify areas in need of further development or guidance. Feedback from students suggests that they would like this information early on in their studies which is why we are recommending that it is added to all level 4 core or programme modules in Blackboard. Instructions for embedding the content can be found on the Skills for Learning website.

Amy Pearson
Content Developer
The Library

I have seen students who have committed academic misconduct and often it is through lack of knowledge and skills. Therefore anything we can do to allow them to understand what academic misconduct is and how to avoid it has to valuable. Prevention is always the best route. It is really easy to add to your Blackboard modules. Simply follow the instructions on the Skills for Learning website. The eLearning is quick to complete, gives really clear information and allows students to test their understanding and knowledge. Students have enough on their plates balancing life, work and study so the last thing we want to do is see them go through a process that could be avoided.

Elaine Washington
Lecturer in Prosthetics

40% of our students completed the test. I hope to increase this by adding information about the material to the first assignment brief and by following this up with a reminder a few weeks later.