

AL MUHIBBAH OPEN UNIVERSITY (AOU), ABUJA

EXAMINATION MISCONDUCT POLICY

Ratified by the Senate of AOU

July, 2024

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1. INTRODUCTION

Al Muhibbah Open University (AOU) is committed to maintaining academic integrity and excellence. Examination misconduct undermines these values and compromises the quality of education. This policy outlines the definitions, procedures, and penalties related to examination misconduct, as well as provisions for students who need to suspend their studies due to health reasons.

2. DEFINITIONS

- a. ***Examination Misconduct***: Any act or attempt by a student to gain an unfair advantage in an examination or assessment. This includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, and falsification of records.
- b. ***Suspension of Studies on Health Grounds***: A temporary halt in a student's academic activities due to verified health reasons, allowing the student to recover without academic penalties.

3. FORMS OF EXAMINATION MISCONDUCT

The following are considered examination misconduct:

- i. Impersonation: Taking an examination on behalf of another student.
- ii. Plagiarism: Using someone else's work or ideas without proper attribution.
- iii. Falsifying Academic Records: Altering grades or other academic records.
- iv. Falsifying Medical Records: Providing false medical documents to gain an advantage.
- v. Re-submission of Used Materials: Submitting previously used materials for assessment.
- vi. Soliciting for Marks: Attempting to influence examiners for better grades.
- vii. Refusal to Fill Malpractice Form: Not completing required documentation when caught.
- viii. Unauthorized Communication: Communicating with others during an examination.
- ix. Unauthorized Change of Seating Location: Changing seats without permission.
- x. Illegal Possession of Exam Materials: Possessing unauthorized materials in the exam hall.
- xi. Possession of Unapproved Written Material: Having unauthorized notes or books.
- xii. Passing Unauthorized Materials to Others: Distributing unauthorized materials.
- xiii. Aiding and Abetting Others to Copy: Helping others cheat.

- xiv. Disobeying Exam Instructions: Not following the exam invigilator's instructions.

4. PROCEDURES FOR HANDLING MISCONDUCT

- i. Apprehension: The invigilator or lecturer apprehends the student and makes them fill out and sign an examination misconduct report form.
- ii. Completion of Examination: The student is allowed to finish the exam with a new question paper and booklet.
- iii. Documentation: The answer script and all evidence are collected and initialled by the student. See Appendix 3 on the management of evidence in Misconduct cases.
- iv. Report Submission: The invigilator submits a detailed report to the Chief Invigilator and Examinations Officer.
- v. Student Notification: The Examinations Officer informs the student in writing about the misconduct and requests a written defense. See Appendix B
- vi. Deferral of Results: The student's examination results are deferred pending investigation.
- vii. Committee Review: The Faculty Student Disciplinary Committee reviews the case, and if necessary, refers it to the Senate Student Disciplinary Committee.
- viii. Decision and Communication: The decision is communicated to the student and relevant departments.

5. PENALTIES FOR EXAMINATION MISCONDUCT

Penalties for examination misconduct may include:

- i. Warning: A formal warning for minor infractions.
- ii. Nullification of Examination: Cancellation of the examination in which misconduct occurred.
- iii. Suspension: Temporary suspension from the university for a specified period.
- iv. Expulsion: Permanent expulsion from the university for severe infractions.

Each case is considered on its own merits, and penalties are determined based on the severity of the misconduct and any previous infractions.

6. SUSPENSION OF STUDIES ON HEALTH GROUNDS

Procedure:

- i. Application: The student submits a written application for suspension of studies due to health reasons, supported by medical documentation.

- ii. Verification: The university's health services verify the medical documentation and provide a recommendation.
- iii. Approval: The application is reviewed and approved by the relevant academic and administrative bodies.
- iv. Notification: The student is informed of the approval and any conditions related to the suspension.

Conditions:

- i. Duration: Suspension is typically granted for one semester, with the possibility of extension based on medical advice.
- ii. Reintegration: Upon recovery, the student must provide medical clearance and may need to meet with an academic advisor to plan their return

7. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

a. *Examinations Officer:*

- Oversee the examination process and handle misconduct reports.
- Communicate with students and committees regarding misconduct cases.

b. *Invigilators:*

- Ensure the smooth conduct of examinations and apprehend students committing misconduct.
- Complete and submit misconduct report forms.

c. *Faculty Student Disciplinary Committee:*

- Review cases of examination misconduct and recommend appropriate actions.

d. Senate Student Disciplinary Committee:

- Handle severe cases of misconduct and decide on expulsions and other major penalties.

e. Health Services:

- Verify medical documentation for suspension of studies on health grounds and provide recommendations.

8. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

i. Continuous Monitoring:

- Regular audits of the examination process to identify and mitigate potential misconduct.

ii. Feedback Mechanisms:

- Collect feedback from students and faculty to improve examination integrity.
- iii. Reporting:
 - Regular reports to the university administration on the status and outcomes of misconduct cases.

9. STUDENT SUPPORT AND RESOURCES

- i. Counselling Services:
 - Provide support for students dealing with stress and anxiety related to examinations.
- ii. Academic Advising:
 - Offer guidance on academic planning and strategies to avoid misconduct.
- iii. Health Services:
 - Support students in managing health issues that may affect their studies.

10. OMNIBUS PROVISION:

In situations where this policy is silent, Al Muhibbah Open University reserves the right to use any other legitimate means to achieve justice and uphold the integrity of the examination process. This may include, but is not limited to, additional investigations, consultations with relevant authorities, and the application of other university policies or national regulations as deemed appropriate by the university administration.

11. CONCLUSION

Al Muhibbah Open University is dedicated to maintaining a high standard of academic integrity and excellence. This policy on examination misconduct and the provisions for suspension of studies on health grounds ensure that students are treated fairly while upholding the integrity of the university's academic programs.

.....
Prof. Ahmed Salisu Garba
Ag.VC, AOU, Abuja

APPENDIX 1

AL-MUHIBBAH OPEN UNIVERSITY, ABUJA

Examination Misconduct Report Form

STUDENT INFORMATION

- a. Student Name:
- b. Matriculation Number:
- c. Course Code:
- d. Course Title:
- e. Date of Examination:
- f. Time of Examination:
- g. Examination Venue:

DETAILS OF MISCONDUCT

Type of Misconduct (Check all that apply):

- Impersonation
- Plagiarism
- Falsifying Academic Records
- Falsifying Medical Records
- Re-submission of Used Materials
- Soliciting for Marks
- Refusal to Fill Misconduct Form
- Unauthorized Communication
- Unauthorized Change of Seating Location
- Illegal Possession of Exam Materials
- Possession of Unapproved Written Material
- Passing Unauthorized Materials to Others
- Aiding and Abetting Others to Copy
- Disobeying Exam Instructions
- Other (Please specify): _____

DESCRIPTION OF INCIDENT:

(Provide a detailed description of the incident, including any relevant context, actions observed, and statements made by the student.)

EVIDENCE COLLECTED

Materials Confiscated (Check all that apply):

- Unauthorized notes
- Mobile phone
- Other electronic devices
- Other (Please specify): _____

DESCRIPTION OF EVIDENCE:

(Provide a detailed description of all evidence collected, including the type, condition, and any markings or identifiers.)

WITNESS INFORMATION

a. Invigilator(s) / Lecturer(s) Involved:

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

b. Security Officer (if applicable):

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

5. STUDENT STATEMENT

Student's Account of the Incident:

(Allow the student to provide their version of events. Attach additional sheets if necessary.)

➤ Student's Signature: _____

➤ Date: _____

Invigilator / Lecturer Statement

➤ Invigilator's / Lecturer's Account of the Incident:

(Provide a detailed account of the invigilator's or lecturer's observation and actions taken.)

Signature of Invigilator / Lecturer: _____

Date: _____

7. SUBMISSION

- Submitted by (Invigilator / Lecturer):

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

- **Received by (Chief Invigilator / Examinations Officer):****

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

8. For Office Use Only

i. Misconduct Report Number: _____

Action Taken:

- Warning
- Nullification of Examination
- Suspension
- Expulsion
- Other (Please specify): _____

Comments:

(Include any additional comments or actions taken by the Examinations Officer or Disciplinary Committee.

Examinations Officer's Signature: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX 2

[Student's Name]

[Student's Matriculation Number]

[Department/Faculty]

Al Muhibbah Open University (AOU)

Abuja

NOTIFICATION OF EXAMINATION MISCONDUCT AND REQUEST FOR WRITTEN DEFENSE

Dear [Student's Name],

This letter is to formally notify you of an incident of examination misconduct that occurred during the [Course Code and Title] examination on [Date of Examination] at [Examination Venue].

Details of Alleged Misconduct

The invigilator reported that you were involved in the following misconduct:

- a. Type of Misconduct: [Specify the type(s) of misconduct, e.g., Unauthorized Communication, Possession of Unapproved Written Material, etc.]
- b. Description of Incident: [Provide a brief description of the incident, including the context and actions observed.]

Evidence Collected

The following materials were confiscated as evidence:

- [List the evidence, e.g., unauthorized notes, mobile phone, etc.]

Request for Written Defense

In accordance with the university's Examination Misconduct Policy, you are required to submit a written defense regarding the incident. Please provide a detailed account of your actions and any supporting evidence or statements you wish to include in your defense. Your written defense should be submitted to the Office of the Examinations Officer no later than [Insert Deadline Date], which is [Number of Days] days from the date of this letter. Failure to submit

your defense by this date may result in the disciplinary committee making a decision based solely on the available evidence.

SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

Please submit your written defense to:

Office of the Examinations Office

Al Muhibbah Open University (AOU)

[Office Address]

Email: [Examinations Officer's Email Address]

APPENDIX 3

PROCEDURE FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF EXHIBITS (INCLUDING MOBILE PHONES) IN ALLEGED MISCONDUCT CASES AT AOU

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INTRODUCTION

This procedure outlines the steps for the management of exhibits, including mobile phones, when they are part of the evidence in cases of examination misconduct at Al Muhibbah Open University (AOU). The aim is to ensure the integrity, security, and proper handling of all exhibits.

DEFINITIONS

Exhibit: Any item or document collected as evidence in an examination misconduct case.

Mobile Phone: A portable electronic device used for communication, which may be confiscated if used improperly during an examination.

COLLECTION OF EXHIBITS

1. Identification:

- a. The invigilator or lecturer identifies and collects any items suspected to be involved in examination misconduct.
- b. The student is informed of the confiscation, and the item is taken immediately to prevent further misuse.
- c. The invigilator completes an Examination Misconduct Report Form, listing all confiscated items.

2. Documentation of Exhibits

- a. Detailed Description: A detailed description of each exhibit is recorded, including type, make, model, condition, and any identifiable marks or features.
- b. Serial Numbers: For mobile phones, record the IMEI number and serial number.
- c. Photographic Evidence: Photographs of the exhibits are taken to document their condition at the time of confiscation.
- d. Chain of Custody Form: A Chain of Custody Form is initiated to track the movement and handling of each exhibit from the point of collection until the case is resolved.

3. Storage of Exhibits

- a. Exhibits are stored in a secure location within the Examinations Office, such as a locked cabinet or safe.
- b. Each exhibit is labelled with a unique identification number corresponding to the Examination Misconduct Report Form.
- c. Access to the storage area is restricted to authorized personnel only.

4. Access and Handling of Exhibits

- a. Authorized Access: Only authorized personnel, such as the Examinations Officer and members of the Disciplinary Committee, may access the exhibits.
- b. Handling Protocol: Exhibits are handled with care to avoid damage or alteration. Handling should be minimized to essential activities only.

- c. Record Keeping: Each access or handling of an exhibit is recorded in the Chain of Custody Form, noting the date, time, purpose, and personnel involved.

5. *Return or Disposal of Exhibits*

- a. Return to Student: If the student is cleared of misconduct, the exhibit is returned in its original condition. The student signs the Chain of Custody Form to acknowledge receipt.
- b. Disposal of Unclaimed Items: If the student is found guilty and the item is unclaimed after the case is closed, the university may dispose of the exhibit following established protocols.
- c. Data Security: For mobile phones, ensure that all personal data is securely wiped before disposal or return, following data protection guidelines.

6. *Roles and Responsibilities*

- a. Examinations Officer:
 - Oversee the collection, documentation, storage, and management of exhibits.
 - Ensure compliance with the procedures and maintain the Chain of Custody.
- b. Invigilators:
 - Collect and document exhibits during examinations.
 - Complete the Examination Misconduct Report Form.
- c. Disciplinary Committee:
 - Review and handle exhibits during the misconduct investigation process.

7. Monitoring and Compliance:

- a. Conduct regular audits of the exhibit management process to ensure compliance with this procedure.
- b. Report any discrepancies or issues in the management of exhibits to the Vice-Chancellor's office.