

# The effect of a penalty tariff on consistent decision-making in cases of student plagiarism

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## Abstract

Consistent penalty decisions once cases have been confirmed are frequently advocated in the literature on institutional management of student plagiarism. This paper looks at a range of actions in one UK University designed to improve consistency. It evaluates the impact of introducing a tariff system where penalties are assigned depending on the level of severity of the breach of academic regulations. The authors consider whether introducing the tariff has improved consistency and interview decision-makers to establish the criteria they use when allocating punishments. Benefits of the tariff are described as well as the need for more discussion between decision-makers as to the way the tariff is applied and the sometimes individual criteria used to choose an appropriate penalty.

## Introduction

The literature on dealing with student plagiarism has increasingly advocated combining a range of actions rather than expecting any one action in isolation to have an impact on the rising number and severity of cases that most Higher Education institutions now face. Examples of actions to deal effectively with student plagiarism have included encouraging academics to redesign their assessment; improving students' induction; better skills teaching; and seeking to broaden the range of detection strategies in use (Macdonald and Carroll, 2006; Martin and Stubbs, 2005; Bretang, 2005; Park, 2004). We, the authors, strongly advocate using what many refer to as a holistic approach which suggests combining a wide range of actions when dealing with student plagiarism. A holistic approach recognises the complexity of the issue of plagiarism and acknowledges that no one action will be effective in dealing with it. However, in this paper, we focus only on decisions about penalties awarded to students once they have been found to have breached academic regulations. We evaluate the impact of changes made in our institution since 2000 and more specifically, since the start of the 2004/5 academic year which were designed to improve the consistency of penalty decisions for confirmed cases.

The case for more consistency in penalty decisions has been made in a number of places. The 2004 Annual Report of Office of Independent Adjudicators expressed concern about inconsistent and potentially unfair treatment of student plagiarism (Deech, 2004). We have previously noted the requirements of the Human Rights Act for fair treatment (Carroll and Appleton, 2001) and our own institutional change made consistent treatment one of the prime reasons for changes to policies and procedures since 1999. Park (2003: 483-4) sets consistency as the reason for Higher Education institutions taking action: 'to develop cohesive frameworks for dealing with student plagiarism that are based on prevention supported by robust detection and penalty systems that are transparent and applied consistently.' Yeo and Chien (2005) describe actions in their Australian university designed to deliver more consistency which are similar to those we have taken in our institution but which have not yet been evaluated as to their impact.

The search for consistency is necessary because its converse, inconsistency, aggravates students (Seymour 2006) and inhibits their willingness to engage with academic regulations which they perceive as 'unfair'. We were able to show in a previous study (Carroll and Appleton, 2005) that without specific actions, decisions as to which penalty to assign in proven cases of student plagiarism appear to be random and are perceived by students as arbitrary. Despite the fact that decisions may be (and in our experience, usually are) considered judgments based on a range of criteria and arising from deeply held beliefs as to the importance of academic integrity, students describe the result as 'a lottery'. When each decision-maker uses different criteria and ranks them differently, this can result in nuanced, tailored punishments but at a cost that students conclude that their own decisions and actions as part of

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their responsibilities as students are perhaps not worth the effort. Why try when things just happen to you at the whim of the institution or a particular marker?

Another approach could be a one-size-fits-all penalty for cases of plagiarism with all attracting the same penalty. However, as anyone who has dealt with more than a few cases will attest, each case involves a range of factors and mitigating circumstances. One size would not 'fit' all nor would it reflect the diverse contexts in which cases are managed. This approach, more appropriately termed 'conformity' would be counterproductive to student development in that it would block student's emerging sense of how academics defend and define their values. Instead, our own institution adopted the search for consistency based on shared assumptions about what criteria to use and what weighting to give each one. In this kind of approach, the word 'consistency' would designate a quality close to the meaning of the word 'reliability' in student assessment: that is, a consistent decision would be one where two people apply the same level of penalty when presented with cases with similar characteristics and contexts. This would constitute interpersonal consistency with intrapersonal consistency denoting the same person applying a similar penalty at a different time if he or she encountered a case with similar characteristics. Because our university's procedures only allow specialist officers to make these choices, intra-officer and inter-officer consistency would make it likely that students across the university were being treated in largely similar ways for largely similar offences.

Achieving this level of consistency proved to be a very challenging goal. In a previous investigation (Carroll and Appleton, 2005) we listed some of the causes for inconsistency which are documented in the literature such as

- different levels of trust in procedures and therefore willingness to use them (Simon et al, 2003);
- widely varying ideas about how much time is required (Macdonald and Carroll, 2006);
- wide variation in the number of markers willing to identify breaches as misconduct (Barnett and Cox, 2005).

We have also witnessed behaviours ourselves that threatened consistency such as having several markers for a cohort; treating students differently early in their studies compared to later on; academics holding different expectations of international students; and administrators' understanding different things by the word 'plagiarism'. This list of potential causes of inconsistency is far from exhaustive.

Despite these challenges, between 2000 and 2004 our University was able to show greater consistency in decisions about penalties awarded for plagiarism by making changes to University policy and procedures. We achieved this improvement by:

- reducing the number of penalties which were acceptable to five
- reducing the number of decision-makers to between 14 and 18 specialists, named as Academic Conduct Officers (ACOs), rather than allowing individual academics to award penalties
- ensuring that ACOs meet regularly to discuss issues and share experiences
- monitoring and tracking decisions with a view to identifying possible anomalies
- integrating the ACO roles and responsibilities into the University's committee structure and decision-making system, including those concerning quality assurance and quality enhancement.

This paper revisits the data on consistency gathered between 2001/4 and investigates the impact of a further development in encouraging consistent decision making. In 2004, after several years of discussion, the Academic Conduct Officers Forum introduced a paper that matched the level of breach of academic regulations committed by a student with one or more of the five designated penalties available for Academic Conduct Officers to use with individual students. The match between the level of breach and one or more of the penalties was referred to as 'the tariff'. The tariff paper named three levels of breach as *Negligent Academic Practice, Academic Malpractice, or Academic Misconduct*.

The paper describes each level and sets out criteria ACOs should use for deciding which was most appropriate in an individual case. Table 1 represents the match between designated penalties and levels of breach of academic regulations.

The following paragraphs contain verbatim extracts from the tariff paper which has not yet been published for wider readership. Briefly, *negligence* was characterised by '... submission of a small

amount of work that was not the student's own; at or near the start of the student's study; and where there are good reasons to believe this breach arose through ignorance or carelessness rather than deliberate deception.' 'Small' would be demonstrated by involvement of only a small portion of the work (e.g. less than 2%) and/or involvement occurring in a part of the work of lesser importance (e.g. the methodology section or appendix rather than the analysis and conclusion). Breaches that were negligent would arise solely from misuse of citation conventions (as opposed to inclusion of entirely unattributed material) as, for example, when the student cites sources in the bibliography rather than within the text and if unattributed quotes do not exceed c. 2% of the total. It is not sufficient for the student to assert misunderstanding; the ACO needs to seek reasons to demonstrate it.

'Negligent academic practice' can not be considered if there is evidence that the student had the intention of gaining unfair advantage or the student had already committed any of the three categories of breaches. Actions appropriate to negligence include:

- assessing the work as if elements not properly attributed had been so attributed (i.e. signalled as someone else's work) and the work derived from collusion had been attributed to a third party. [Penalty 1 in Table 1]
- disregarding the elements which are not the student's own work and which are not correctly attributed then assess the remaining work. [Penalty 2 in Table 1]
- requiring the student to make necessary amendments to their work and return it for a reduced or capped mark as determined by one of the above methods. [Penalty 3 in Table 1]

The next level of severity of breach, 'Academic malpractice', can be attributed when '... breaches arose from misunderstanding but are not excessive.' This would happen when the extent mirrors 'negligent academic practice' but it is not reasonable for the student to show such a level of ignorance or carelessness. For example, all breaches as part of a third year dissertation and small breaches occurring after a previous finding of 'negligent academic practice' would be deemed 'academic malpractice'. Malpractice would also be designated if ignorance or carelessness is demonstrated but the breach is too extensive to consider 'negligent academic practice'.

'Academic malpractice' cannot be considered if

- there is any evidence that the student intended to gain unfair advantage
- the student's record shows any previous offence of academic malpractice or negligent academic practice
- the extent of the breach means that no reasonable person would have concluded it was academically appropriate.

For pragmatic reasons, the last category would be treated as interchangeable with a breach so extensive that disregarding the plagiarised / colluded elements would render the work unassessable.

All 'academic malpractice' must result in the student's mark being less than would have been the case if only penalty 2 was awarded (i.e. disregarding of the material in breach of regulations). The penalty for 'academic malpractice' should be

- reducing the mark by a specified number of percentage points [penalty 3 in Table 1]
- requiring the student to correct and return the same piece of work for a mark that will then be reduced by a specific number of penalty points [penalty 3 in Table 1]
- requiring the student to correct and return the same piece of work for a mark capped at a specific percentage point [penalty 3 in Table 1].

The ACO must specify the reduction or cap at the time of imposing the penalty. The work is then assessed and moderated through the normal assessment processes. Care needs to be taken to ensure the student does not gain a potential advantage by checking that the corrections made are only those required to remove the breaches and that any cap is designated significantly below the mark appropriate to the quality of the original work.

The third level, 'academic misconduct', arises when

- the scale of the breach is so great that no reasonable person should conclude that it was appropriate academic behaviour
- the student has a recorded offence of 'academic malpractice' or 'academic misconduct'
- the student admits or, on the balance of probability, the ACO determines that the student intended to gain an unfair advantage by their behaviour.

The penalties under this category cover the widest range. At the minimum end, a piece of work where a first-year student commits a first offence consisting of a relatively small breach, admits attempting to gain unfair advantage and shows contrition may only warrant a correct and return penalty (Penalty 3 in Table 1) such as that awarded to 'academic malpractice'. At the other extreme, a second or even third occasion where a student submits multiple pages lifted directly from the Internet or a first offence that involved a student stealing another student's work and submitting it thereby depriving the second student of any marks would probably warrant referral to a disciplinary committee with a recommendation of suspension or exclusion from the University. (Penalty 6 in Table 1)

Most cases of 'academic misconduct' have as the appropriate penalty either the award of a zero for the piece of work [penalty 4 in Table 1] or for the module [penalty 5 in Table 1]. Penalty 4 is more appropriate for a first significant breach, or one repeat of a minor breach. Penalty 5 is appropriate where there is clear evidence of the intention to cheat.

[Insert Table 1 here]

In order to judge the impact of the 2004 tariff paper's introduction on the consistency of penalty decisions by ACOs, a baseline study was undertaken of penalty decisions in the previous four years and has been published elsewhere (Carroll and Appleton, 2005). Even though the retrospective study relied on less-than-complete data, it did demonstrate greater consistency compared with decision-making before 2000 (i.e. before changes designed to improve consistency and defensibility were introduced). Table 2 records the percentage of penalties, reviewed retrospectively, that fall within the tariff paper's guidelines as well as decisions that fall outside the guidelines, in that they are either too severe or too lenient than those awarded following the tariff recommendations.

[insert Table 2 here]

The data for the 2004/5 academic year by 14 ACOs were recorded centrally and, for the first time, ACOs classified the level of breach that had occurred using terminology stated in the tariff paper. This paper considers the latest review and is based on data which was gathered more systematically than in 2001 – 2004 due to the introduction of improved administrative systems and record keeping. The authors evaluate the new data, consider the impact of the tariff agreement and investigate ACOs' experience of using the tariff to underpin their penalty decisions.

## **Methodology**

All centrally recorded decisions by ACOs between September 2004 and August 2005 were inspected to record the level of severity of the breach, the assigned penalty and any other information as to how decisions were made with all findings expressed as a percentage of the total. Only percentages rather than actual numbers are available for external review but the data represents actions taken on approaching 500 cases in 2004/5. The total number of cases dealt with by ACOs has doubled, year on year, since 2001 and incomplete data for 2005/6 indicates that the trend in increases continues.

When documentation was inspected, if no level was stated, one of the three tariff designations (*negligence*, *malpractice*, or *misconduct*) was assigned based on the information provided on the standard form, using the criteria stated in the tariff paper. Forms lacking a level occurred in less than 20% of cases and although the designated level may differ from that which an ACO would have selected, most records included sufficient information to make a reasonable judgement as to what level might have been selected.

Finally, semi-structured 30 minute telephone interviews were conducted with ACOs asking them for their views and experience of using the tariffs, their methods of selecting penalties, and strategies they used to determine the student's intention.

## **Findings**

Table 3 records the 2004/5 percentages of each penalty awarded for each level of breach with the shaded area denoting penalties which fell within the tariff.

[place Table 3 here]

It is notable that few ACOs seemed to use Penalty 2, i.e. the penalty that required the marker to disregard any work that was not the student's own and mark the rest. However, comments on the central record of cases implied that Penalty 2 was, in fact, selected for work of very poor quality which resulted in a mark of zero in that it was judged to contain no material worthy of assessment. The ACO then recorded the penalty as a zero for the piece of work. The practice of recording the result rather than the action or penalty accounts for most of the 14% of cases awarded a more severe penalty than would have been appropriate for 'negligent academic practice'. It was concluded, therefore, that decisions for *negligence* were consistent.

Penalties for 'academic misconduct' were almost entirely consistent with the tariff. In 2004/5, central records do not mention any penalties assigned which were not stated as acceptable in the policy. Penalties for 'academic malpractice' recorded nearly half of all penalties awarded in 2004/5 to be other than those designated in the tariff paper as appropriate to that level of breach.

Comparison between data from 2004/5 after the tariff paper was agreed and that obtained from the previous three years (2001/2; 2002/3; 2003/4) are shown in Tables 4, 5 and 6.

[insert tables 4, 5, 6 here]

### **Findings from interviews**

To explore what the central records meant in more detail, interviews with ACOs were asked about their experience of using the tariffs. The interviews produced the unanimous view that setting out levels of breach and matching them to one or more penalties (the 'tariff') was useful; several described it as 'essential' and as necessary for transparency. No-one claimed to have difficulty categorising offences. One ACO had never had a misconduct case, but sometimes found it difficult to decide between the remaining two levels as, for example, 'where a first year plagiarises quite a lot but clearly didn't know, and a student who should know better plagiarises but much less.' Several ACOs used the categories when talking to students about their conduct and approach to academic work. In explaining each level to students, two ACOs had uncovered further gaps in the student's understanding not related to the student's own offence (e.g. regarding collusion where a student is being investigated for plagiarism).

Turning to penalties, most interviewees said that once the level of breach was established, they had no difficulty in selecting a penalty from the list provided in the procedures. However, further discussion showed they were using additional criteria and taking into account factors not mentioned in the tariff document. Two ACOs felt pressurised to act outside the tariff boundaries by reducing marks rather than awarding a formal warning because colleagues who referred students were 'unimpressed' if the result was 'just a formal warning'. Several interviewees seemed unaware of the requirement that very serious cases should be referred to a University Disciplinary Committee despite this being written into the regulations and the tariff document.

Although ACOs could choose from the full range of penalties, most seemed to have their 'favourites' with variation between ACOs as to the penalties most frequently allocated. One explained his frequent use of a reduction of 10% in marks and/or a formal warning by noting that that almost all referrals were students at the beginning of their studies. Many avoided requiring the student to correct and return work for a capped pass mark because it required their colleagues to do more work; one ACO only used this penalty when she could assess whether the problem had been properly resolved herself such as where a first-year student had referenced badly and the ACO felt able to check this had been corrected without any other changes being made. One ACO used the correct and return penalty but required a new piece of work lest the student gain an unfair advantage and to avoid the danger of further collusion between students. [Note: requiring a new piece of work is not one of the recommended penalties.] One ACO felt that it was sometimes difficult to decide between assigning a formal warning and capping the maximum mark the work can be assigned, preferring what she saw as 'an in-between mark'. In fact, other ACOs in a similar situation simply applied a stated deduction in marks.

Generally ACOs experienced difficulty from time to time in deciding which was the more severe penalty: a capped pass or a deduction of marks. Some felt that this uncertainty led to the penalty decision taking into account the underlying quality of the work rather than simply applying a penalty consistent with the offence. A further example was offered where the poor quality of the assessment task or clarity of instructions was taken into consideration although this is not strictly within the bounds of the tariff document. However, this often led to helpful and constructive discussion with Module Leaders about the assessment they were setting.

Students who start their University course after having done their first year at another institution presented problems as they were new to the University but not to HE study. ACOs tended to treat them more like Stage 1 students. Finally, one or two ACOs were more lenient when they discovered that little preventative work had been undertaken with students or where staff reporting the offence appeared to be hostile to particular groups of students (usually, to international students) and seemed to see providing support in good academic practice as outside their remit as teachers.

Most cases involved judgements about mitigating circumstances to do with personal problems, financial difficulties, stress, etc. ACOs that were interviewed said they were not influenced by such matters and that these were not important in ascertaining evidence on intentionality or to the decision about the penalty. Although some respondents stressed the need for flexibility in imposing penalties, others were uncomfortably aware that flexibility could be construed as inconsistency, lack of transparency or unequal treatment and felt it should be resisted.

In general, ACOs reported a mixture of experiences with establishing intention. One ACO had never had an instance of a student denying the offence or even defending themselves. He thought this was because cases were only pursued where there was incontrovertible evidence. Other ACOs reported having more difficulty with cases where 'hard evidence' was lacking and/or students' denials were strong. In such cases, the ACOs made a 'judgement call' based on any evidence of the authenticity of their work, or as a result of discussion with the student as to the process used to produce the coursework. Usually, one or both provided sufficient guidance for deeming the students' claim of ignorance as 'believable or unbelievable'.

ACOs said they often used the textual evidence to decide on intentionality. Sometimes it is clear whether or not the student intended to breach regulations as, for example, where the offence is plagiarism and a student is consistently referencing poorly; this was often taken as a sign of ignorance rather than of intention to cheat. In contrast, if a student referenced carefully in most of the text aside from a couple of copied 'chunks', this was deemed an intentional effort to deceive the assessor. Many ACOs based decisions about intention on a discussion with the student about their study skills, perhaps posing a question about how they went about writing the coursework. This, apparently, often resulted in the student revealing very poor strategies such as highlighting instead of note taking which subsequently led them to paste together highlighted notes in a way that the student construed as 'using sources' as required. Cases of collusion and/or copying were much more problematic in establishing intention unless the copying was done without the generator's permission.

## **Discussion**

The tariff paper has provided significant benefits beyond the hoped for one of consistency in that it has made the penalty decision more transparent and defensible and (arguably) more fair both to ACOs who must implement penalty decisions and students who must bear the consequences of their breaches of academic regulations. ACOs say they use the paper to discuss the breach with students and to further develop students' understanding of plagiarism and their responsibilities for adhering to academic regulations.

Overall, consistency in the 2004/5 penalty decisions has been achieved in that more severe breaches are likely to be awarded more severe penalties and most cases classified as *negligence* are dealt with consistently [discussion of the apparent anomalies will appear later]. Cases of *misconduct* (which will have the most impact on students' subsequent academic experience and, indeed, on their lives), were dealt with notably more consistently in 2004/5 than had been the case in the four years before the introduction of the tariff paper. Treatment for *misconduct* is also notably more consistent in 2004/5 than was the case for the other two levels of breach in the same academic year.

However, closer inspection of the data for 2004/5 shows clear variation in how ACOs define the boundaries between breaches and how they decide which level is most appropriate in a particular case. At interview, individual ACOs expressed confidence in selecting the appropriate level of breach and confidence in their ability to apply the correct penalty yet penalties awarded in 2004/5 for *negligence* and *malpractice* reveal 50% of decisions falling outside of tariff boundaries. Interviews revealed gaps in ACO knowledge and/or inaccurate interpretations of what the tariff paper required. In an effort to identify the causes of inter-officer inconsistency more closely, the data on *negligence* and *malpractice* were re-inspected and revealed that all decisions for 'negligent academic practice' without tariff boundaries (14% of the total) were attributable to one newly-appointed ACO in the first few months of taking on the role. This ACO appeared unwilling to designate *malpractice* and *misconduct* for a breach that was deemed unintentional. However, whilst overlooking the extent of the breach and level of the student in arriving at a level of breach, the ACO nevertheless took them into account when allocating the penalty (but not the name of the offence) and the other data on the form implied that were the cases to be relabelled as *malpractice*, then penalties would be in line with the tariff.

There were no such straightforward explanations for inconsistencies within the level of *malpractice*. Many ACOs in their interviews suggested they had 'favourite' penalties that they awarded, implying that decisions were not always linked to the case itself, and that they used additional criteria when selecting penalties. This may in part explain the inconsistency.

Interview evidence revealed that simply having criteria expressed in a tariff of penalties was not the same as having a shared understanding of what the criteria meant, nor agreement as to which criteria were most important. There was a clear lack of consensus on how to allocate a level and in some cases, how to deal with mitigation. Returning to the earlier reference to reliability in assessment decisions, inspection of 2004/5 data confirms the widely-documented difficulties with achieving consistency between decision-makers (Price and Rust, 1999) when relying on stated criteria.

In the 2004/5 data on ACO decisions, we have again shown the importance of discussion and shared experience in reaching shared understanding of the tacit and implicit knowledge that underpins the tariff paper. We have also confirmed the impact of poor or absent induction and mentoring for those new to a complex role such as Academic Conduct Officer. Where new ACOs had little or no induction, they had to fall back on their own interpretation of the role and in fact, they had to replicate the levels of shared understanding gained by the ACO in the previous five years which were encapsulated in the tariff paper.

### **Recommendations and future actions**

We need to continue to use, track and interrogate use of the tariff paper as one tool for improving consistency. Investigation needs to be at the level of individual ACOs as well as an overall estimation of consistency. We do not yet track inter-officer consistency but this, too, would be useful in investigating the impact of any changes in induction for new ACOs. It may also be that changes over a longer time frame will give a more robust assessment of the impact of the tariff paper. We intend to continue to track and monitor the use of the tariff paper, to review the use of all five penalties, to review whether any need modification in the light of their use, and to continue to report to the relevant university committees what steps are being taken to meet the requirements of the Office of Independent adjudicators to deliver fair, consistent and transparent penalty decisions for student plagiarism.

In an earlier paper, (Carroll and Appleton, 2005) we argued for adopting a community of practice approach to achieving greater consistency. This study confirms that simply having a statement of tariff or even taking steps to improve consistency will not be fully successful unless decision makers regularly meet to discuss the tacit and implicit criteria they are using to make decisions. We can usefully adopt tried and tested approaches used for assessment in the new area of academic integrity. As a minimum, we need to increase the number of times per year ACOs are invited to meet together and take more active steps at encouraging all to attend. The meetings may need to be somewhat longer than the current two hours to allow for more discussion of individual cases, seeking shared understanding of the tariff paper.

The case study demonstrates the central role of induction and monitoring for those taking on the ACO role. Where induction is poor or lacking, it appears difficult if not impossible to achieve the desired levels of consistency.

Finally, the study confirms the importance of a central record which will allow investigation at a sufficient level of detail to reveal what is being decided by whom in what circumstances. Without this, institutions will be hard pressed to explain how and why they reach the decisions they do and more importantly, to learn from their actions so that in future, staff and students deliver the consistent decisions that are so frequently advocated.

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Table 1: Penalty tariffs recommended for three different levels of breach

| <b>Penalty</b> (in brief) | <b>Negligent Academic Practice</b> | <b>Academic Malpractice</b> | <b>Academic Misconduct</b> |
|---------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
|---------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|

|   |  |  |  |
|---|--|--|--|
| 1. A recorded conversation with ACO + warning of future breaches                                    |  |  |  |
| 2. Marker disregards the breach(es) + marks the rest of the work to arrive at a grade               |  |  |  |
| 3. Reduction in marks by stated amount; resubmit of corrected work for a capped mark or capped pass |  |  |  |
| 4. 0% for the piece of work   |  |  |  |
| 5. 0% for the module or course  |  |  |  |
| 6. Referral of the student to University Disciplinary Committee                                     |  |  |  |

Table 2: Penalties allocated within tariff boundaries prior to tariff introduction

| Level                        | Negligent Academic Practice |       |       | Academic Malpractice |       |       | Academic Misconduct |       |       |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------|-------|----------------------|-------|-------|---------------------|-------|-------|
|                              | Academic Year               | 01/02 | 02/03 | 03/04                | 01/02 | 02/03 | 03/04               | 01/02 | 02/03 |
| More lenient than the tariff | 0%                          | 0%    | 0%    | 14%                  | 4%    | 5%    | 0%                  | 20%   | 14%   |
| Within the tariff            | 92%                         | 70%   | 90%   | 57%                  | 68%   | 62%   | 97%                 | 55%   | 79%   |
| More severe than the tariff  | 8%                          | 0%    | 10%   | 29%                  | 23%   | 23%   | 0%                  | 0%    | 0%    |
| Other*                       | 0%                          | 30%   | 0%    | 0%                   | 5%    | 10%   | 3%                  | 25%   | 7%    |

N= 377

Table Three: Percentage of penalties awarded for each level of breach

| <b>Penalty (in brief)</b>                                    | <b>Negligent Academic Practice</b> | <b>Academic Malpractice</b> | <b>Academic Misconduct</b> |
|--|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. recorded conversation + warning                           | 62%                                | 10%                         | 0                          |
| 2. disregarding the breach(as), marking the rest of the work | 0                                  | 3%                          | 2%                         |
| 3. reduction in marks; resubmit for a capped mark            | 23%                                | 49%                         | 32%                        |
| 4. 0% for the piece of work                                  | 14%                                | 36%                         | 44%                        |
| 5. 0% for the module   | 0                                  | 1%                          | 22%                        |
| 6. referral to University disciplinary committee             | 0                                  | 0                           | Not recorded               |

Table 4: Penalties allocated for Negligent Academic Practice within tariff boundaries, 2001 - 2005

| <b>Level</b>                 | <b>Negligent Academic Practice</b> |      |      |      |
|------------------------------|------------------------------------|------|------|------|
| <b>Academic Year</b>         | 01/2                               | 02/3 | 03/4 | 04/5 |
| More lenient than the tariff | 0%                                 | 0%   | 0%   | 0%   |
| Within the tariff            | 92%                                | 70%  | 90%  | 86%  |
| More severe than the tariff  | 8%                                 | 0%   | 10%  | 14%  |
| Other*                       | 0%                                 | 30%  | 0%   | 0%   |

Table 5: Penalties awarded for Academic Malpractice within Tariff boundaries, 2001 - 2005

| <b>Level</b>                 | <b>Academic Malpractice</b> |      |      |      |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|------|------|------|
| <b>Academic Year</b>         | 01/2                        | 02/3 | 03/4 | 04/5 |
| More lenient than the tariff | 14%                         | 4%   | 5%   | 10%  |
| Within the tariff            | 57%                         | 68%  | 62%  | 52%  |
| More severe than the tariff  | 29%                         | 23%  | 23%  | 37%  |
| Other*                       | 0%                          | 5%   | 10%  | 0%   |

Table 6: Penalties awarded for Academic Misconduct within tariff boundaries, 2001 - 2005

| <b>Level</b>                 | <b>Academic Misconduct</b> |      |      |      |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|------|------|------|
| <b>Academic Year</b>         | 01/2                       | 02/3 | 03/4 | 04/5 |
| More lenient than the tariff | 0%                         | 20%  | 14%  | 2%   |
| Within the tariff            | 97%                        | 55%  | 79%  | 98%  |
| More severe than the tariff  | 0%                         | 0%   | 0%   | 0%   |
| Other*                       | 3%                         | 25%  | 7%   | 0%   |