

MSM Irregularities Policy and Procedure

MSM has a zero-tolerance policy on irregularities (including Fraud, Plagiarism, Forgery and Academic Outsourcing) and MSM views with seriousness irregularities in its various forms. Irregularities (including Fraud, Plagiarism, Forgery and Academic Outsourcing) is a serious academic offence, and a record of this notification will be kept in the student file.

Students have been clearly informed about the significance of academic honesty and academic conduct, besides the consequences of acting against them (*see the Articles Rules of procedure for examinations and irregularities (including Fraud, Plagiarism, Forgery and Academic Outsourcing) in the Education and Examination Regulations*).

All written examinations¹ and Master's thesis and other submitted work (including drafts) are scanned with Turnitin software by the MSM education office or MSM partner institutions or in Moodle. The outcome of these scans gives an indication of the amount of copied text and are merely used as an indicator for plagiarism. Not all plagiarism can be found through Turnitin (Safe Assign or Ephorus).

In addition to the Turnitin outcome, all written examinations and the Master's thesis should be checked in detail for irregularities (including Fraud, Plagiarism, Forgery and Academic Outsourcing) by the Examiner (Lecturer), Supervisor and/or (External) Evaluator and report any irregularity they might notice to the Board of Examiners.

Policy in case of irregularities (including Fraud, Plagiarism, Forgery and Academic Outsourcing) in group assignment

If the Board of Examiners determines that irregularities (including Fraud, Plagiarism, Forgery and Academic Outsourcing) has been established in a group assignment, it will take appropriate measures and/or impose sanctions for all students involved in the group assignment as per paragraph 4 and 5 of Article 8.2 of the applicable EER.

In principle, all group members are responsible for all parts of the assignment in case of a group assignment and not only the part they have written themselves. There is a group responsibility for the whole document and a student is not only responsible for ensuring that his or her own part is not plagiarized. Group work will be judged as group work and not as several pieces of individual work, unless it is clear that specific students have committed irregularities (including Fraud, Plagiarism, Forgery and Academic Outsourcing). In that case, only the students in question will be penalized. If this is not the case and the Board of Examiners can't verify which specific part is written by which student, all group members are equally responsible for all parts of the assignment and not only the part they have written. In those cases, the Board of Examiners can only evaluate whether the group assignment itself has been plagiarized.

Procedure to report Academic Misconduct

Any Examiner (Lecturer), Supervisor and (External) Evaluator reviews all written examinations and Master's thesis (including drafts), not only for their "quality", but also for irregularities (including Fraud, Plagiarism, Forgery and Academic Outsourcing).

¹ Written examinations can take place on campus or online (by computer/digitally), or can be in the form of the submission of one or more (group) assignment paper(s).

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In case any form of irregularities (including Fraud, Plagiarism, Forgery and Academic Outsourcing) is suspected (s)he has the obligation to report the case in writing to the Board of Examiners (MSM-examinationboard@maastrichtuniversity.nl) immediately by filling out the “*Reporting irregularities Form*” (with CC copy to the MSM education office or MSM partner institution).

Please note that, in case an irregularity is reported to the Board of Examiners the evaluation of the course examination or Master's thesis by the examiner is suspended. If the suspicion is not confirmed, the evaluation by the examiner will be resumed.

Motivation form instead of public hearing

Before deciding on any appropriate measures and/or sanctions, the student will be informed and gets the opportunity to submit a written “motivated” reaction within two (2) weeks by filling out the “Motivation Form”. The Board of Examiners aims to take a final decision and responds in writing within eight (8) weeks after receipt of the written “motivated” reaction of the student.

Measures/ sanctions in case of Irregularities

If the suspicion of an irregularity is confirmed, the Board will declare the relevant course examination or Master's thesis or attendance registration null and void (“No Grade” label NG) and take appropriate measures and/or impose sanctions as set down in Article 8.2 paragraph 4 and 5 of the applicable EER.

Filing an appeal

According to Art. 7.61 of the WHW, the possibility exists to appeal the decision taken by the Board of Examiners, (in writing) with the Board of Appeal for Examinations (CBE). The term for lodging a “motivated” appeal is six (6) weeks, starting from the date the decision was announced. A student can send the appeal to Complaint Service Point, P.O. Box 616, 6200 MD Maastricht, complaintsservice@maastrichtuniversity.nl. If a student wants to appeal, (s)he needs to mention the case reference number of the decision letter. For more information regarding the appeal procedure, please be referred to the website of the University Maastricht via the following link, <https://www.maastrichtuniversity.nl/support/during-your-studies/complaints-service-point/filing-appeal>. Also please be referred to www.maastrichtuniversity.nl/ssc > study related legal support for more information.

Please refer to Chapter 8 of the applicable EER and the General UM Regulation for Irregularities for more information.