

# The Effective use of Poor Academic Practice (PAPs) Warnings

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# Goals for today

- Academic Irregularities at NTU
- Mission statement for Academic Integrity
- The 'Murky Borderland'
- Introducing Poor Academic Practice (PAP) Notifications
- PAP processes
- Successful PAP usage in Psychology
- Planning ahead
  
- Group activities

# Types of academic integrity issues (Academic Irregularities at NTU)

## Exams

- Cheating
- Personation / Impersonation

## Coursework

- Plagiarism
- Collusion
- Falsifying data
- Contract cheating
- Personation

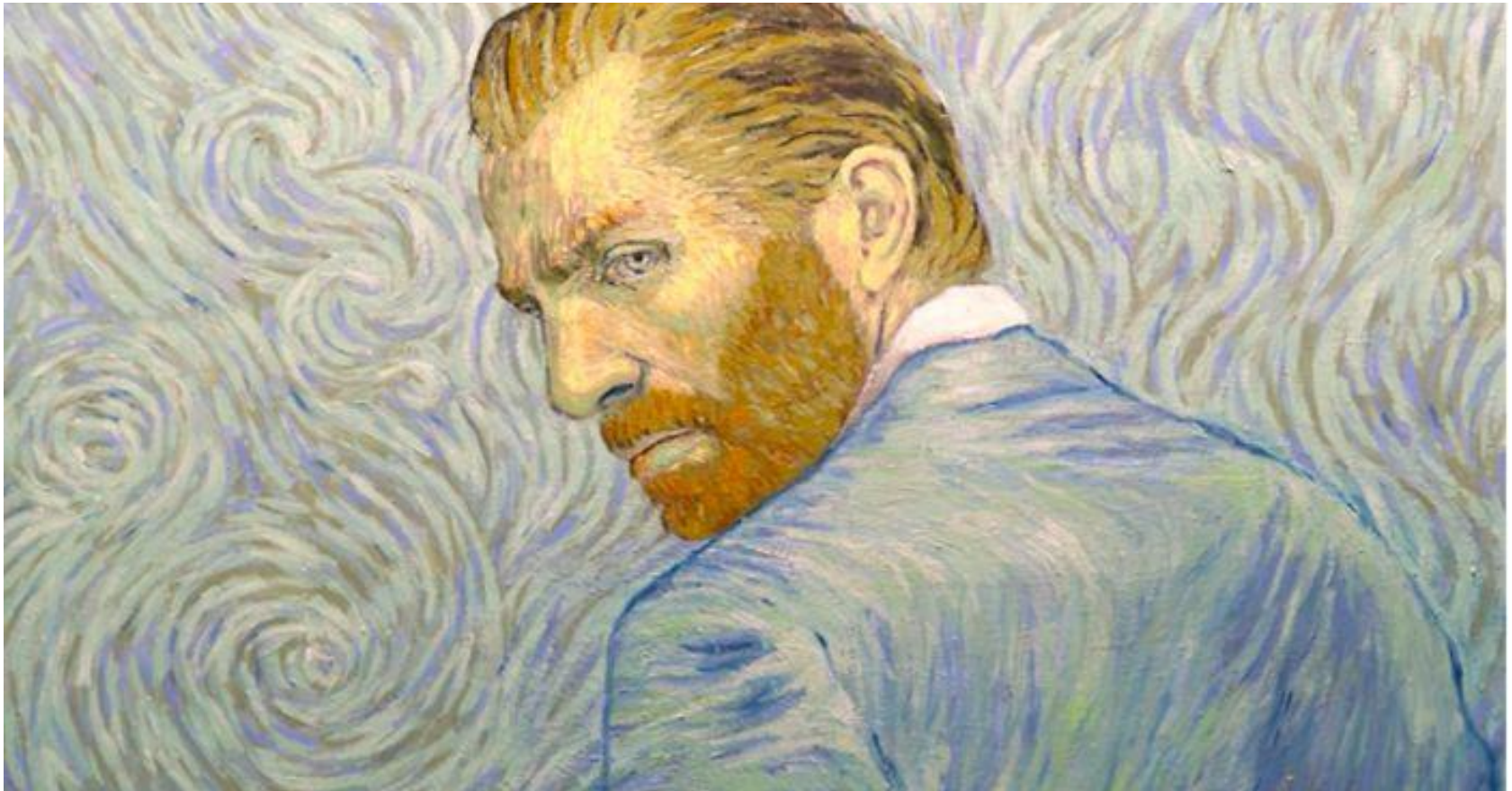
## Dishonest Practice

- Anything else

POOR ACADEMIC PRACTICE	MISCONDUCT	OFFENCE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SAIP is not convened</li> <li>• Dealt with by Course Team within the Department</li> <li>• Written warning given to the student</li> <li>• No further action taken at this point, but a record is kept on the student file</li> <li>• Student has the right of Appeal against findings of Poor Academic</li> </ul>	Dealt with at SAIP	Dealt with at SAIP
	<b>Penalty Range</b>	<b>Penalty Range</b>
	Element Capped at Pass	Module Capped at 0
	Element capped at 0	Level Capped at Pass
	Module Capped at Pass	Ordinary Degree
	Module Capped at 0	Studies terminated

# How common are academic integrity issues?

- Difficult to pin down!
  - Type of academic integrity issue examined
  - Reliance on staff detection rates and self-report data from students
- Overall stats range from 3% of students cheating to around 80%!
- Over the past 3 years, 50,000 British University students have been caught cheating (Mostrous & Kenber, 2016)
- Perception of increasing rates in recent years (Newton, 2015)
  - Students see exam cheating as clearly wrong
  - Copying and pasting material very common (and sometimes endorsed!)
  - Possible link to 'commodification of education'



# Mission statement for AIs

- Two possible strategies – rule compliance and academic integrity
- Rule compliance strategies:
  - Strong focus on discipline
  - High costs for problematic behaviour
  - Very limited focus on development or pedagogy
  - Bureaucratic approach
  - Very mixed evidence on effectiveness
  - Staff more hesitant to enact due to penalties for students
- Academic integrity strategies:
  - Errors are seen as part of pedagogic development
  - Student-focused approach
  - Strong discipline for repeated issues

# The Murky Borderland

- The academic integrity policies and at many HEIs are focused on a binary model
  - work is problematic or non-problematic
- This approach ignores the 'murky borderland':
  - Some students are unaware of UK assessment conventions
  - Some students have yet to develop appropriate academic skills
  - Some students have been encouraged to cheat at pre-HE levels of education
- Many Departments had developed informal processes





# Poor Academic Practice (PAPs) Notifications

- Poor Academic Practice (PAPs) Notifications
  - Newly introduced in 2017-2018
- What is a PAP?
  - The student demonstrates a lack of understanding of scholarly practice and appropriate academic representation.
  - Can apply to all levels of study
  - Not progressed to SAIPs but *can* be an outcome from a SAIP
- Record kept of PAPs
  - Maximum of 2 PAPs issued (across entire duration of course)
  - Further issues automatically elevated to SAIP

# PAP usage across NTU during 2017-2018

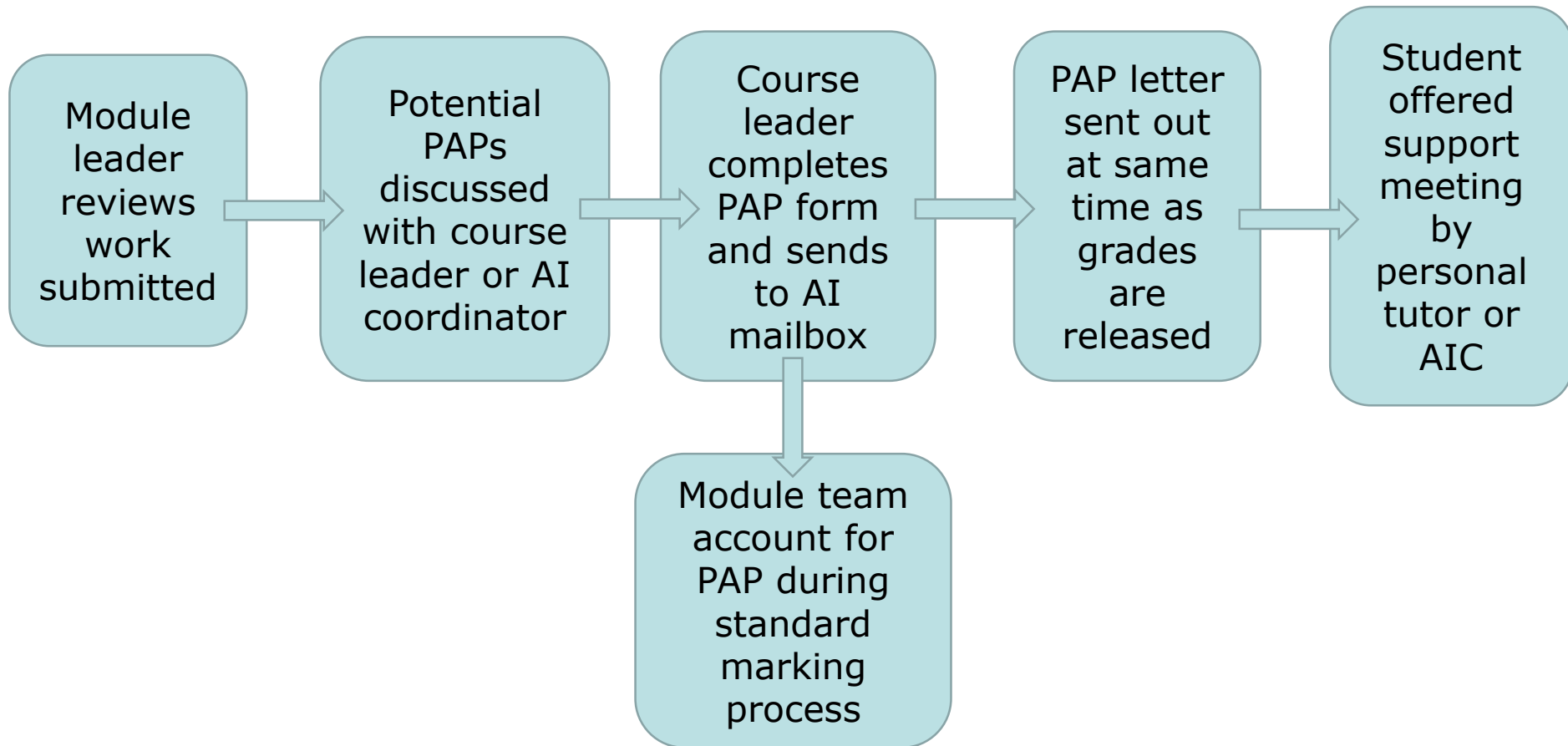
	AAH	AADH	NLS	SSS (including NIE)	SST	ARES	NBS
How many PAPs were issued from your School in 2017/18?	8	2	5	111	62	13	10
How many of these PAPs went to the Appeal stage?	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
How many students had more than one PAP?	1	0	0	6	1 *	2	0

\*(2 concurrent instances)

52% of PAPs issued by SSS

34% of NTU PAPs issued by Psychology

# What is the process for PAPs?



# Poor Academic Practice (PAPs) Notifications

- Course leader prepares PAP submission form
  - Liaises with relevant module team to capture detail
  - Accompanied by appropriate evidence (e.g., Turnitin report)
  - PAP paperwork sent out by School Office
  - Appeals handled by HoD
- PAP accounted for during marking process
  - Issues interpreted in light of assessment criteria / grading matrix
  - Avoids arbitrary / subjective penalties
  - It is possible for a submission to fail due to a PAP
- Strong focus on development in Psychology:
  - Student directed towards appropriate support
  - First PAP results in an invitation to discuss the issues
  - Second PAP results in a requirement to discuss the issues

# Successes in Psychology

- Piloted use of PAPs during 2017-2018
  - Particular focus on level 4 and level 7 students
  - Reduction of SAIP cases by 25% (compared to typical rates)
  - Increase in SAIPs being upheld to 100% of cases (filtering out more 'borderline' cases)
  - No appeals upheld
- Contextualised coverage
  - PAPs raised with students during academic tutorials
  - Personal tutors actively engaged in PAP processes
- Strong focus on student support and skill development
  - Very low recidivism after PAPs issued (>10% of students)
  - Very quick processing of information (unlike SAIPs)
  - Good impact / take up from students due to links with marking process

# Development of Specialised PAP resources

- Standardised templates for submission of PAPs:
  - Letter and e-mail templates developed
  - Guidance available for module teams
- Support 'bundle' automatically issued with PAP letter:
  - Sources of support clearly identified
  - 'Plain English' guide provided to provide context and answer FAQs
- PAP appeals:
  - Standardised appeal form developed
  - Guidance prepared for HoDs when reviewing PAP appeals

# Planning ahead

- Increasing use of PAPs on SSS courses:
  - Training events for course and module leaders
  - Specific modules targeted for focus of resources
- Evaluation of commonly effected modules:
  - Consideration of assessment design
  - Possibility of focused reminders about PAP and AI policies
- Integration with NTU Academic Integrity priorities:
  - Developmental use of Turnitin
  - Online training courses for Academic Integrity
- Coordination with other HEIs and professional bodies

**Thank you for your time!**

**Any questions so far?**



# Group activities

- Evaluation of resources prepared to support PAPs
    - Would these documents be suitable on your own courses?
    - Are there changes you would like to see to this paperwork?
    - Are there additional considerations for your courses?
  
  - Decision making on PAPs
    - Reviewing Turnitin reports from different cases
    - Deciding on potential outcomes for the cases (no issue vs. PAPs vs. SAIPs)
    - Are there contextual factors that would influence your decision making (level of study, timing in assessment schedule etc.)?
  
  - Considering the causes of PAPs:
    - Brain storming on the possible origins of poor academic practice
    - Identifying steps that course teams could take to address these issues
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