

Sotheby's INSTITUTE OF ART

VIVA VOCE FOR SUSPECTED ACADEMIC MALPRACTICE – LONDON

This procedure is applicable to all SIA - London students registered with the University of Manchester

Introduction

1. Sometimes whilst marking a taught student's assignment, the marker may suspect that the work is not entirely the student's own, but on further investigation cannot find any textual evidence to substantiate their suspicions. In such cases (i.e., where it is strongly suspected that academic malpractice has been committed, but where no direct evidence can be produced), a *viva voce* may be held to determine the authorship of the work.
2. The *viva voce* is conducted because there is reason to believe that the student's work is not entirely their own work. It is important to note: the *viva voce* is not an academic assessment of the student's work; the aim of the *viva voce* is to give the student the opportunity to demonstrate that the piece of work is entirely their own and is held to confirm that the student:
 - Undertook the reading and research themselves;
 - Undertook all the preparatory work themselves;
 - Understands what they have written;
 - Wrote the piece of work themselves.
3. This Procedure is aligned with the process and guidelines as outlined in the University of Manchester's [Viva Voce for Suspected Academic Malpractice](#) document.

Principles

4. A *viva voce* may, exceptionally, be held where it is suspected that academic malpractice has been committed but where no textual evidence can be produced, e.g., in cases where it is suspected that the student has commissioned the work from a third party, or in cases of suspected unauthorized use of generative AI (Artificial Intelligence) software. The purpose of the *viva voce* is to provide the student with the opportunity to demonstrate that the work is their own, prior to an Academic Integrity Review Tribunal hearing (as described in the Institute's Academic Integrity and Malpractice Policy and Procedure).

5. Only the piece of work in question will be the focus of the *viva voce*.
6. The Head of Quality, or their nominee, must be consulted and approve the use of the *viva voce* prior to this being set up and the student informed.
7. Two members of academic staff must be present at/conduct the *viva voce*; this will normally include the marker of the assessment.
8. The student may be accompanied by a person of their choice (normally a fellow student, member of staff or an Institute Student Representative). Any individual accompanying the student is there as observer only.
9. The *viva voce* should take place on Institute's premises and must take place in a quiet suitable room and without interruption. In certain circumstances the *viva voce* can be conducted remotely.
10. The student should be made to feel at ease and the format of the *viva voce* must be explained to them at the beginning. The person leading the *viva voce* should begin by informing the student that it is suspected that they may not have written the work and that *viva voce* represents an opportunity for the student to demonstrate that they did. They should also explain that, if authorship remains in doubt at the end of the *viva voce*, the matter will be referred to an Academic Integrity Review Tribunal (see the Institute's Academic Integrity and Malpractice Policy and Procedure) at which the student will have a further opportunity to put their case.
11. Intensive questioning of the student may be required; however, this must be non-aggressive. The questions asked should provide the student with opportunities to demonstrate that the work is their own.
12. An accurate record of the *viva voce* should be taken; this record may be used to form the evidence base for any future investigation at an Academic Integrity Review Tribunal. A copy of the record must be provided to the student.
13. A copy of this Procedure will be made available to students via Canvas.
14. If a *viva voce* is to be conducted, it should not normally take place more than **thirty (30) calendar days** after the assessment feedback deadline.
15. If a *viva voce* is to be conducted, the student will be advised in advance in writing of the reason for the *viva voce* being held and given adequate notice (i.e., **ten (10) working days**) of the requirement to attend the *viva voce*. Students will also be advised that if they do not attend the *viva voce*, the members of the *viva voce* panel reserve the right to make a judgement on an outcome.

16. Students will be given guidance on what a *viva voce* is, the purpose of the *viva voce* and how to prepare for it.
17. Reasonable adjustments will be made to ensure that candidates with additional support needs are not disadvantaged for reasons relating to a long-term medical condition, sensory impairment, specific learning difficulty and/or disability.
18. Students are required to inform the Institute if there are any particular arrangements or adjustments that need to be made to enable their full participation in the *viva voce* (they will be advised of this in the letter inviting them to attend the *viva voce*).
19. At the end of the *viva voce* there will be one of the four outcomes:
 - i. The staff conducting the *viva voce* will confirm that they accept that the student wrote the work in question; no further action will be taken. If the piece of work in question has already been marked, this mark will stand, and where not it will be marked on its own merit.
 - ii. The staff conducting the *viva voce* remain doubtful of the authorship of the work in question and the student will be required to attend an Academic Integrity Review Tribunal hearing.
 - iii. The student accepts that they have committed academic malpractice and their case will be referred to an Academic Integrity Review Tribunal for a penalty to be applied.
 - iv. In cases where it is the first offence and the student admits academic malpractice in an essay assignment, the staff conducting the *viva voce* may reach a determination that the essay is re-written and re-submitted, and capped at an agreed mark.
20. Unless 19 iv. applies, the *viva voce*, in itself, will not result in a penalty being applied if academic malpractice is still suspected or the student admits committing academic malpractice during the *viva voce*; penalties can only be applied by an Academic Integrity Review Tribunal.

Appendix A: Viva Voce Information for Students

What is a *viva voce*?

A *viva voce* is a conversation that will be held between members of academic staff and you.

What is the purpose of the *viva voce*?

The *viva voce* is being held because there is reason to believe that the piece of work you submitted, or parts of it, is not entirely your own work. The aim of the *viva voce* is to give you an opportunity to demonstrate that the piece of work is entirely your own and to confirm that you:

- undertook the reading and research yourself;
- undertook all the preparatory work yourself;
- understand what you have written;
- wrote the piece of work yourself.

Who will be present at the *viva voce*?

Normally the marker of the assessment in question will be present and another member of academic staff will be present. An appointed Secretary may also be present to minute the *viva voce*.

Can I bring anyone with me to the *viva voce*?

Yes, you may be accompanied by a person of your choice (normally a fellow student, member of staff or an Institute Student Representative). Anyone accompanying you, however, will not be able to participate in the *viva voce* (they will be present as observer only).

How should I prepare for the *viva voce*?

You must be thoroughly familiar with the content of your work and the research that was involved, as you will be asked questions by the members of academic staff about the sources you used, your ideas, the words used, your research, reference and data collection as relevant for the piece of work in question. These questions are asked so that the members of academic staff can be assured of the authorship of the work.

What will I need to bring to the *viva voce*?

You will need to bring with you all the documentation that you used in completing the piece of work, e.g., your list of source documents, evidence of primary data collection, rough notes and assessment drafts, etc.

What will happen during the *viva voce*?

You will be asked to explain/be asked questions on how you researched and produced the piece of work, how you found the sources quoted in your bibliography/reference list and asked to explain your ideas and theories and any elaborate vocabulary you have used. Your answers will help the academic staff make a decision as to whether the work you submitted is your own.

What will happen after the *viva voce*?

At the end of the *viva voce* there will be one of three outcomes:

- i. The staff conducting the *viva voce* will confirm that they accept that you wrote the work in question; nor further action will be taken;
- ii. The staff conducting the *viva voce* are still doubtful of the authorship of the work in question and you will be required to attend an Academic Integrity Review Tribunal hearing, for which you will be notified separately (see the Institute's Academic Integrity and Malpractice Policy and Procedure);
- iii. You accept that you have committed academic malpractice and your case will be referred to an Academic Integrity Review Tribunal for a penalty to be applied (for which you will be notified of separately).

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