

Academic Misconduct

This document talks you through how to prepare for the misconduct hearing, what to expect on the day and what to do once you have received your outcome. For allegations of poor academic practice, please see the union website for more information.

Remember: these are allegations only – they are conversations between yourself and the academic staff to understand why this situation has happened and to hear from you about your work

Links: [Academic Regulations](#) | [Academic Governance](#) | [RGU](#)

[Student and Applicant Forms](#) | [Academic Governance](#) | [RGU](#)

Preparation

- The main thing you can do for preparation is to be as open and honest as you can about the situation. If you have committed the misconduct it is better to admit it to the panel rather than try and lie.
- You will need to talk about your piece of work in question. This goes from researching your topic, the sources you used, how you used them (direct quotes/paraphrasing/background reading) to writing the piece of work – what tools you used to write your work, did you use Microsoft Word or something else, did you use any dictionary/thesaurus, did you use any grammar/spell checker software (Grammarly, ChatGPT or Quillbot are examples of AI tools) and you need to be very clear on how you used these tools.
- You will also need to be prepared to answer questions on the content of the work which is a way for the panel to check your learning of the topic. This could be why you chose to focus on a certain topic or why you used certain resources etc....
- If it is a collusion allegation then you may get questions on whether you worked with other students and how this groupwork was incorporated into your individual work

The Day Itself

- You can expect roughly 3 members of staff in the hearing – an associate dean, an academic member of staff and someone from the school administration team who will take a minute of the meeting
- You will be there and you are entitled to take up to 2 representatives with you who aren't there to speak on your behalf but are there for emotional support and as an observer. You can ask someone from the union to attend with you, a friend/family member or you can choose to attend alone. You will need to contact the panel to inform them who will be attending with you and provide an email address if it's a teams meeting

- The university will introduce everyone in the room and go into detail on the academic regulations surrounding misconduct (see regulation A3-2 Student Conduct Procedure)
- The university will then present their evidence and concerns to you
- It is then over to you to present your side of the story. Try and provide as much detail as possible about what was going on around the time of the assessment and any external factors that impacted your performance
- There will be some questions where the university clarifies what you have said and ask any follow-up questions relating to their concern. This could include questions about the content/concepts within your work to ensure that you have been the one to produce the final product. Don't be afraid to ask for clarification if you don't understand what is being asked or if you need a minute to gather your thoughts before answering.
- The hearing will close with the university letting you know they will review everything and get an outcome to you within 5 working days via email. The email will have a copy of both the hearing minutes and an outcome letter. The letter will tell you whether misconduct has or hasn't been established and if it has, there will be a sanction. For a first time misconduct I don't expect you to lose your place in university, I expect the following range – conditional discharge (which means the panel say they have found misconduct but no further action needed), a written warning, a grade reduction, or an F with all resits remaining. For someone on their second+ misconduct, the sanctions could be more severe and are found in the academic regulations

After the Hearing

- There is an appeal process for students not happy with the hearing outcome - you can appeal both the fact that misconduct was established and the sanction if you didn't admit the misconduct, **OR**, the sanction only if you did admit the misconduct.
- The appeal form asks you for your contact details, the circumstances around the hearing, the ground(s) you are appealing on and then your statement. You will also need to provide evidence as part of your appeal to help back up what you are saying
- The appeal needs to be submitted up to 10 working days after you receive the outcome of your hearing.

For both your misconduct hearing and any following appeals, if you would like support at any step of the way please get in touch with the union advice service who are more than happy to go into further detail with you.