

Economics Department

Process for investigating suspected academic misconduct: student guide

All investigations are conducted in line with the University Academic Integrity Framework and Regulation 11.

1.
 - (i) A marker, moderator, module leader, or member of the Assessment & Feedback team will alert the Academic Integrity team of possible misconduct due to either concerns over a high-level match on the student's Turnitin report for the assessment or based on academic judgment.
 - (ii) In cases where misconduct is discovered during an in-Department examination or test, the invigilator will inform the student that a report will be made to the Academic Integrity team.
 - (iii) Misconduct suspected during a centrally held examination will follow Regulation 10.
2. The referral will be reviewed by the Academic Integrity Lead (AIL) or Deputy Director Postgraduate Studies (DDPG) who will either:
 - (i) refer the assignment back to marker/module leader with a decision of:
 - no case to answer
 - poor academic practice. All assessments are marked in accordance with the marking criteria which has an implicit expectation of good academic practice. In cases of poor academic practice, work is marked on its merits without giving credit to the part that suffers from poor practice. Judgements about poor academic practice cannot be appealed.
 - (ii) refer the assignment to the Academic Integrity team to convene an Academic Conduct Panel (ACP) meeting.
3. If there is a suspicion of academic misconduct, the student will be invited to:
 - (i) submit a written statement ahead of the ACP outlining how they approached writing the assignment (students are not obliged to submit a written statement);
 - (ii) and attend the ACP (students do not have to attend and failure to attend will have no impact on the determination made by the ACP).
 - (iii) In some cases, students will be asked to attend a post-assessment viva ahead of the ACP if it is deemed necessary to clarify whether the student's knowledge matches that of the submitted work.
4. Ahead of any meeting, the ACP will review the student's statement (if one has been submitted) or viva report along with any further relevant information or evidence.
5. When the student attends the ACP:
 - (i) Where relevant to the assessment and nature of suspected misconduct the student will be shown the Turnitin Report (we do not provide access to the report prior to the ACP as the meeting will outline exactly the issue(s) with the assignment and provide context and clarity).
 - (ii) The student will be able to address the misconduct concerns during the meeting.
 - (iii) Students will not be assessed on the content of their work at the Panel meeting.
 - (iv) The student will not be provided with a decision or outcome of the case during the ACP.

- (v) For cases of suspected collusion or cases involving groupwork, all students being investigated will be invited to attend the ACP at the same time. They will also be given the opportunity to speak to the Panel individually, without other students.
- (vi) The student/s may be accompanied by a person in a support capacity, usually a personal tutor or senior tutor, please refer to our Academic Integrity page for further information.

If a student does not respond to the invitation from the ACP and fails to attend the meeting, the Panel will meet in their absence to review the case, and a recommendation will still be made to the Deputy Head of Department.

6. The ACP will discuss the case after the meeting and will decide 'on the balance of probabilities' whether there is a case to answer or not.
 - (i) If the ACP determines a case of 'poor academic practice' they will refer the assessment back to the marker and inform the student. The assessment will be marked in accordance with the marking criteria – see point 2.(i) above.
 - (ii) If the ACP determines there is no case to answer they will inform the student, and marks will be processed and released as normal.
 - (iii) If the ACP determines that on the balance of probabilities there has been misconduct, they will write a report outlining the case and make a recommendation to the Deputy Head of Department (DHoD). The ACP will provide the DHoD with all the supporting documentation.
7. The DHoD will make the final decision about the case, it is expected that they will agree with the ACP's recommendation.
8. The student will be informed in writing of the decision/outcome of case.
9. If a sanction has been applied, the student can request, within 10 working days, that their case be considered by the University Academic Integrity Committee (AIC).
10. If the student wants their case to be reviewed by an AIC, then they must provide evidence to the DHoD of why they feel that the sanction is not appropriate or warranted. Once received the DHoD (or representative) will make a report to the Academic Registrar who will determine if review by an AIC is appropriate or if there is no case to answer. The Academic Registrar will communicate the decision to the student. For further guidance please refer to [B4.4](#).

At points **2.** and **7.** a case may be referred immediately to the university Academic Integrity Committee as outlined under [Regulation 11. B3.6](#)

Students should be aware that any outcome of an ACP will be considered by the end of year Exam Board who will make the final determination on whether a student progresses or will need to retake examinations.

The Department has a robust process for investigating suspected academic misconduct. Consequently, since 2021, twenty-three students have lodged appeals against the penalties imposed on their marks by the Department and the University has upheld the Department's decision in twenty-two instances.