The Academic Misconduct Process, Categories of Offence and Penalties

What happens when a student is suspected of Academic Misconduct?

Name
Role
Date
1. Overview of the Disciplinary Process
2. What evidence is collected?
3. Categories of Academic Misconduct
4. Penalties if found guilty of Academic Misconduct
5. Risks associated with a guilty outcome
6. What to do if you find yourself at a disciplinary hearing
Overview of the Disciplinary Process

1. Lecturers report ALL suspected cases of academic misconduct
   • The lecturer makes the student aware that their work is being referred to the School’s Disciplinary Committee (SDC) and explains why this is happening

2. Incident Report Form is submitted to the Conduct Office. In the form, the lecturer will:
   • Explain the type of academic misconduct suspected (collusion, plagiarism, etc)
   • Include all evidence to support the case

3. An Investigation Pending (IP) hold is placed on the student’s record for each course referred to SDC.

4. A panel of two or more academics review each case
   • The student will be invited to the disciplinary hearing and/or to submit a formal statement.

5. Recommendation made to University Dean for independent review and approval

6. The student, school and course leader are informed of outcome

7. If guilty the penalty is imposed by the school

8. The student’s record is updated according to the outcome

Whole process can take several weeks and can prevent progression to the next stage of study
Evidence of Academic Misconduct

Staff and those involved have seen many examples of all types of academic misconduct, and know what to look for.

- Student submissions
- Staff and student statements
- Turnitin reports (plagiarism, etc)
- Reports from third parties
- Copies of web pages, resources
- Copies of social media conversations

Evidence includes anything that is relevant to the case
Categories of Offence – Academic Misconduct

Category A – University Level
- For any repeat offender, or a first time serious offence
- Where penalty involved may alter students' final degree award
- Where penalty imposed may require student to withdraw from HWU

Category B – School Level
- Typically a first offence
- Where offence impacts a single course assessment
  - Kept on record for full degree
  - Can have serious implications for degree

Category C – Warning
- Not a formal disciplinary offence, but a warning
- Limited to minor cases for 1st time offenders in their 1st semester of 1st year
  - Incorrect, inconsistent or inadequate referencing
  - Over reliance on paraphrasing
  - Minor plagiarism
Some Examples of Guilty Disciplinary Outcomes

**Category A – University Level**
- Authorised to impose financial penalties
- Suspension
- Compulsory withdrawal, expulsion
- Void course, or several courses, such that it prevents graduation

**Category B – School Level**
- Resubmission of work at next available opportunity
- Setting additional examination or assessment – capped grade
- Void a course/ Invalid Grade
- Void a course and one other course

**Category C – Warning**
- Formal warning
- Advice and academic support
Risks associated with a guilty outcome

1. **If a course is voided**, the student’s academic transcript will show:
   - IG *(Invalid Grade)* indicating that they have been given zero (0) credits for the course.
   - IG will remain on the transcript. This means when shared with potential employers, students will need to do some explaining!

2. **Honours year students** do not have any resit (re-assessment) opportunities.
   - If the University Discipline Committee (UDC) void a course, the student will not graduate with an Honours degree.

3. **PGT students** are limited to one resit attempt in a maximum of 3 taught courses
   - If UDC void a course, the student will need to use a resit opportunity. If they have already exhausted their resit opportunities, or more courses are voided, the student will not progress to the MSc dissertation and will exit without an MSc degree.
If you find yourself at a Disciplinary Panel

Be Honest

Admit it if you are guilty, be honest about why, accept responsibility.

✓ Lying to a disciplinary panel is also academic misconduct
  • A possible second offense and referral to University level panel
✓ Answer all the questions asked of you truthfully.
✓ You can bring someone for support (family, friend, student rep, etc)
  • But they cannot speak for you.

Seek advice from your
personal tutor, course leader or programme director.
Any questions or comments

Academic Integrity Matters