



Guide to Student Misconduct

This document is a guideline for students who have received an allegation of misconduct, to understand this process and how to respond effectively. This guide should be read in conjunction with the [Student Conduct Rules / Procedure](#).

UNDERSTANDING YOUR ALLEGATION

If you receive a letter from the university alleging that you engaged in misconduct, the first thing to do is read through your allegation notice carefully. The notice is usually sent to your student email account and includes:

- Details about the behaviour that the university believes you engaged in.
- Details about which policy / procedure this behaviour is a breach of.
- Any evidence about the allegation.
- Details about what the next step is.

You should read through the allegation letter carefully, look at the evidence closely, and consider whether you agree misconduct has occurred (even if you did not intend to), or if you wish to challenge the allegation.

PREPARING A RESPONSE

In most cases, you will be given the opportunity to respond in writing before a decision is made. We recommend writing a personal statement that explains:

- If you agree misconduct has occurred:
 - Reasons why you agree,
 - Any external influences which may have impacted upon your decision making,
 - A reflection about the overall situation,
 - How you would handle the matter differently in the future, and
 - Provide any evidence that is relevant to your submission.
- If you disagree with the allegation:
 - Reasons why you disagree,
 - A response to each of the points raised by the University,
 - If applicable, how you would handle the matter differently in the future, and
 - Provide evidence that demonstrates that the misconduct did not occur.

If you would like feedback on your statement before you submit it to the University, complete the [Student CARE MQ Referral form](#) select "Advocacy support" as the reason for referral. Be sure to attach:

1. The allegation letter and any evidence you have been sent
2. Your draft statement and any evidence you intend to submit

ATTENDING A MEETING

As part of the misconduct process, you may be invited to attend a meeting with the University. These meetings are an opportunity to discuss your case with you, for you to answer questions to clarify your position, and for the University to decide how to proceed with your case. A meeting could be an informal investigation meeting with one or two staff members, or it could be a formal committee meeting.

Investigation Meeting

An investigation meeting may occur if the university has questions about an incident relating to you. For example, the university may want to meet with you to record your opinion on an incident. They may ask what you witnessed, how you were involved, and for any evidence you have about the matter.

After this meeting, the University will usually contact you via email to confirm:

- If your case has been dismissed, and no further action will be taken, or
- If your case will progress and be handled in accordance with the Student Conduct Procedure.

Remember that you can request to bring a support person (e.g. a student advocate) with you to the investigation meeting, and you can request a copy of any evidence available.

Committee Meeting

The Committee meeting is a formal process held to consider an allegation of misconduct. Between 3-6 committee members (usually Academic Staff) and support staff will be present at this meeting, where you will be asked to respond to the allegation. You may be asked questions about your statement, asked to clarify parts of your case, or respond to questions to help the committee better understand the incident.

After listening to you, the committee will request that you wait outside (or in a breakout room if online) while a decision is made about your case. The committee will decide:

- Whether you are responsible for the alleged misconduct, and if so, the most appropriate outcome/sanction to apply, or
- Whether you are not responsible for the allegation, and the matter should be dismissed.

In most cases, the committee will then invite you back into the meeting where you will be informed of the outcome. You will also receive formal confirmation of the decision via your official student email account around 5-10 days after your meeting.

If you are invited to attend a Committee meeting, you may like to consider bringing a support person with you. This person is not a legal representative, nor able to act or speak on your behalf, but is there to reassure you and provide comfort should you find the process intimidating. If you would like Student Advocacy to attend with you, please contact us as soon as possible to discuss your case.

What should I do if I cannot attend a committee meeting?

Before meeting with a committee, consider providing your written statement. If you are unable to attend a meeting, respond to the email as soon as possible and let them know about your situation. The meeting organizer will let you know if attendance is possible via another method (e.g. via Zoom), whether your case can be rescheduled, or whether the committee can make a decision based on your statement (in your absence).

SANCTIONS

If you are found responsible for misconduct, the decision maker can issue penalties ranging from a warning to a permanent exclusion from University. The penalty will depend on how serious the matter is, whether you have been involved in any misconduct in the past, and how other similar cases have been managed. See Clause 29 of the of the Student Conduct Procedure for information on sanctions that could be applied.

RESOURCES AVAILABLE FOR YOUR STUDIES

It is important to also be aware of places that you can seek [support](#), to help you make good decisions when studying at Macquarie. Support could include:

- Speaking with your [Academic Adviser](#) in your [Faculty](#), to obtain Academic Advice or ask course-related questions.
- Contacting [Student Wellbeing](#), to manage your overall health and wellbeing through Counselling, Welfare and Accessibility services.
- Accessing [Study Skills Resources](#) to develop the key skills required for university study.
- Obtaining [support around your assignments](#), to ensure you are submitting work to the best of your ability.

SUPPORT AVAILABLE

Student Advocacy is here to support you through any Misconduct process. We can help you

- to:
- understand the allegation and the penalties that may apply,
 - understand the misconduct procedures,
 - provide feedback on your written statement to send to the committee,
 - check the technology that you require to join the meeting,
 - be your support person on the day of your meeting,
 - answer any other questions that you may have,
 - connect with University support services, and
 - if required, provide advice about appealing a misconduct decision.

To connect with Student Advocacy, complete the [Student CARE MQ Referral form](#) > select “Advocacy support” as the reason for referral. You should attach your allegation letter and any evidence you have received so that your advocate can provide you guidance about your case.

*This guide was prepared for you by the
Student Advocacy & Support Service.*

*The information is correct as of July
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