



Guide to breach of academic integrity

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

UNDERSTANDING YOUR ALLEGATION

If you receive a letter from the university alleging that you breached academic integrity, 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 section of the Academic Integrity Policy has been breached.
- Any evidence about the allegation.
- Details about what the next step is, including an opportunity to provide a written response and/or meet with the university to discuss.

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

Whether or not you intend to meet with the university, it is recommended to provide a written response to the allegation. This will ensure that you have explained your position clearly and provided any evidence you would like considered for your case. Your response should include:

- If you agree misconduct has occurred:
 - Reasons why you agree
 - Any external influences which may have impacted upon your decision-making
 - A reflection on the overall situation
 - How you would handle the matter differently in the future
 - Provide any evidence that is relevant to your submission, and
 - Explain which penalty you feel would be fair
- 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

The University may give you a strict deadline to respond, and therefore you should not delay if you would like support.

ATTENDING A MEETING

If the university has invited you to attend a meeting, it is strongly recommended that you respond to the invitation. These meetings are an opportunity to discuss your case further, 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 with one or two staff members (for example, with an Academic Integrity Officer), or it could be a formal Faculty Integrity Committee meeting. This will depend on the type of alleged misconduct, and the severity of the sanction that may be applied.

If you are attending a meeting, consider:

- Requesting a copy of the University's evidence if you were not sent this as part of your allegation
- Provide a written statement and any evidence you wish to be considered before the meeting
- Arranging to bring a support person (for example, a Student Advocate) for emotional support (rather than to present your case)

If you would like an Advocate to attend with you as a support person, complete the [Student CARE MQ Referral form](#) select "Advocacy support" as the reason for referral. You may need to:

1. Attach the allegation letter, your statement, and the evidence you intend to submit.
2. Include information about when your meeting is occurring.
3. Inform the University that you intend to bring an advocate with you for support.

OUTCOME AND SANCTIONS

You will be notified of the outcome of your case via email, within 10 business days. The email will explain whether or not you are found responsible for the alleged misconduct, any penalties which will be applied to your case, and any appeal avenues you have.

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 the sanctions section of the [Academic Integrity Breach Procedure](#) for information on sanctions that could be applied.

Remember that Student Advocacy can help you to understand the sanction which has been applied and support you through the appeals process if required.

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 with guidance about your case.

RESOURCES AVAILABLE FOR YOUR STUDIES

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

- Seek [Course Guidance](#) to determine your remaining units to plan your studies.
- Contacting [Student Wellbeing](#), to manage your overall health and wellbeing through Counselling, Welfare and Accessibility services.
- Accessing the [Writing Centre](#) to develop key skills required for university study.
- Obtaining [assignment support](#), to ensure you are working to the best of your ability.

