

Dealing with Misconduct

Students

If there is any suspicion that you may have committed plagiarism the following procedures are described for lecturers to deal with it in a fair way. Make sure you understand these steps, your role in the procedure and your rights. Give your full co-operation to speed up the process.

Lecturers

Ignoring plagiarism is a disservice to students, the university, the academic community and even to yourself. If you have evidence of academic dishonesty, you are expected to take the following steps to report such evidence promptly.

1. Investigation

- Convene a meeting with the student.
- Describe your suspicion and present proof of your findings.
- Ask the student for his/her version of the story.
- Spell out the student's rights.
- If the suspicion seems to be unfounded, the matter is resolved.
- If, however, you find confirmation for your suspicions, the matter can be solved internally or referred to the Committee for Discipline (Students).

2. Handling a charge of plagiarism in the Department

The matter can be resolved in the department when the following applies:

- plagiarism was committed in an assignment;
- it is the student's first transgression;
- plagiarism is minor and the lecturer is of the opinion that a reduced mark is sufficient penalty;
- the student admits the transgression;
- the student accepts the punishment and regards the case as settled;
- the head of the department supports the solution.

3. Referral to the Committee for Discipline (Students)

The matter is referred to the Committee for Discipline (Students) if any of the following applies:

- plagiarism was committed in a dissertation or thesis;
- the student has previously been found guilty of plagiarism;
- the extent of the plagiarism is such that a reduced mark is not sufficient penalty;
- the student opposes the accusation;
- the head of the department is of the opinion that the matter be referred to the Committee for Discipline (Students).

The referral should include a written report on the incident as well as statements in writing by yourself, the student and anybody else who can testify. The student's statement should include his/her student number, signature and contact details.

Documentation to be delivered to the Registrar via the office of the head of the department.

The marks for the assignment/research to be held back until the ruling of the Committee for Discipline (Students).

4. The Disciplinary Hearing

If the Registrar is of the opinion that reasonable grounds exist for a charge of misconduct against a student, he formulates a charge in writing and arranges for a copy thereof to be served on the student concerned, and the student is simultaneously summoned, in writing, to attend the hearing.

- Lecturers and other persons whose presence is required are notified.
- An accused student is entitled to be assisted by his/her parents or legal guardian during the hearing.
- An accused student is not entitled to any representation during the hearing, provided that, at the request of the accused student, the Chairperson on the Committee can permit him/her to avail him/herself of representation at own expense.
- Copies of the relevant documentation will be sent to the dean and the head of the department.

5. Penalties

- If the student is acquitted, the marks for the assignment/research will be made available.
- If the student is found guilty, the Committee will decide on a suitable penalty.
- The student may appeal to the Appeal Committee of the Senate against a conviction and/or sentence.

Copies of relevant documentation will be sent to the dean and the head of the department.