

ACADEMIC OFFENCES

An academic offence is any act or omission whereby a student can gain an unfair academic advantage.

You do not have to have intended to commit the offence for it to have taken place. Therefore, accidentally forgetting to reference a source or being unaware that you haven't completed work using correct academic practices are not usually accepted as excuses for committing an academic offence.

TYPES OF OFFENCES

Cheating: Relates to behaviour that takes place in an examination, class test, or laboratory test.

Collusion: Working on an assignment with anyone else if that assignment is meant to be done individually.

Contract Cheating: Commissioning or seeking to commission another party (either paid or unpaid) to produce academic work on your behalf. This will include the use of AI software to write your work for you.

Copying/Permitting Copying: Copying another student's work or permitting another student to copy any of your work which you submit for assessment.

Duplication/Self-Plagiarism: Using or reusing significant, identical, or nearly identical portions of your own work which has been previously submitted for assessment within the University or another institution.

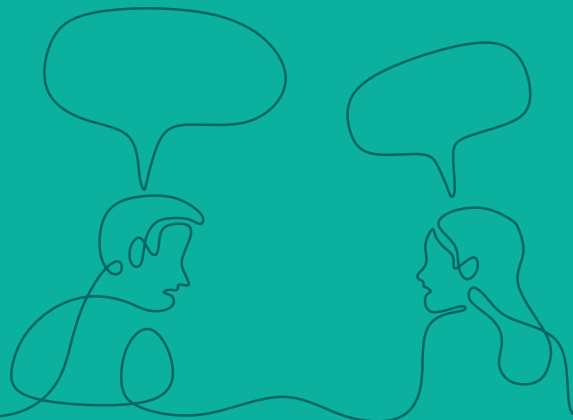
Fabrication: Claiming to have carried out experiments, interviews, or any form of research which you have not in fact carried out, or inventing or falsifying data, evidence, or experimental results.

Plagiarism: Presenting the words or thoughts of others as your own.

THE PROCESS

- 1) A potential academic offence is reported by a Marker of a piece of work
 - This can be by either reviewing a Turnitin report or noticing a similarity between two or more pieces of work
- 2) The student is invited to an initial investigation meeting
 - The main purpose of this meeting is to understand what may have gone wrong and to understand if the student was aware of what they were doing
 - Evidence as to why the Marker reported this is usually sent to the student at this stage. If not, the student should request this in advance of the meeting
- 3) The student should contact SU Advice for guidance and support
 - SU Advice staff are allowed to accompany students to meetings but please note that they are not permitted to act as a representative or speak on a student's behalf
 - The student may be invited to submit a Statement outlining their understanding of what may have gone wrong in advance of the meeting. SU Advice staff are happy to offer guidance in advance on what to include in this

- 4) The student attends the initial investigation meeting
 - This will be with a person other than the Marker or a panel, depending on whether the offence is considered to be minor or major
- 5) The student is notified of the outcome within eight working days
 - If the student is content, no further action is needed
 - If the student is unhappy, they can submit an appeal
- 6) The student submits an appeal to the Academic Offences Committee
 - An Appeal Form must be submitted within 10 working days of receiving the initial outcome
- 7) A Sifting Panel decides on the appeal's merit
 - If accepted, it will be referred on to the Academic Offences Committee
 - If rejected, the student is notified and there is no further route of appeal
- 8) The student is invited to and attends a meeting with the Academic Offences Committee
 - The student has the opportunity to outline their grounds for appeal and any mitigation they feel should be considered
- 9) The student is notified of the outcome within eight working days
 - If the student is content, no further action is needed
 - If the student is unhappy, they can submit an appeal
- 10) The student submits an appeal to the Academic Offences Appeals Committee
 - An appeal may be made under another one of the grounds, on the relevant form, within ten working days
- 11) A Sifting Panel decides on the appeal's merit
 - If accepted, it will be referred on to the Academic Offences Appeals Committee
 - If rejected, the student is notified and there is no further internal appeal process. The student may wish to submit a complaint to the Northern Ireland Public Service Ombudsman
- 12) The student is invited to and attends a meeting with the Academic Offences Appeals Committee
 - The student has the opportunity to outline their grounds for appeal and any mitigation they feel should be considered by this new Committee
- 13) The student is notified of the outcome within eight working days
 - If the student is content, no further action is needed
 - If the student is unhappy, they may wish to submit a complaint to the Northern Ireland Public Service Ombudsman



POSSIBLE OUTCOMES

School Level – Minor Offence

- A written warning to the student.
- A mark of zero awarded and the student allowed to resubmit for full marks.
- A mark of zero awarded and the student allowed to resubmit for a maximum of the pass mark.
- A mark of zero awarded and the student not allowed to resubmit.

School Level – Major Offence

- A written warning to the student.
- A mark of zero awarded and the student allowed to resubmit for full marks.
- A mark of zero awarded and the student allowed to resubmit for a maximum of the pass mark.
- A mark of zero awarded and the student not allowed to resubmit.
- The matter is referred to the Academic Offences Committee.

Academic Offence Committee

- A mark of zero awarded and the student allowed to resubmit for full marks.
- A mark of zero awarded and the student allowed to resubmit for a maximum of the pass mark.
- A mark of zero awarded for the components of the modules and the student not allowed to resubmit.
- The student is suspended.
- The student is required to withdraw from the University.

In addition to the above, in the case of a postgraduate research student the following additional outcomes are possible:

- The matter is referred back to the School to provide the student with support and guidance.
- The student is directed to: remove the offending material from the work submitted; and to carry out further work as necessary to replace it.
- It is recommended to the examiners that no degree be awarded.

Academic Offence Appeals Committee

- The appeal is upheld and the penalty imposed by the Academic Offences Committee is rescinded.
- The penalty imposed by the Academic Offences Committee is confirmed.
- A different penalty is imposed from among those set out in the list of penalties open to the Academic Offences Committee. This shall not be more severe than the original penalty imposed.

FURTHER HELP

Undergraduate students are advised to reach out to the [QUB Learning Development Service](#) before attending these meetings which provides support with best academic practises such as referencing and paraphrasing

Postgraduate students are advised to reach out to the [Graduate School](#) to find out available support.



GET IN TOUCH

Remember, the staff in SU Advice are happy to read through a draft of your Statement and/or Appeal Form if you would like guidance and feedback. If you would like further advice, please email su.advice@qub.ac.uk