

# Academic Integrity Procedures

## Guidance for Students

Your department has made an allegation that a piece of work you have submitted for assessment is in breach of the Academic Integrity Policy. **The University takes breaches of the Academic Integrity Policy very seriously and you should now try to engage with us positively to resolve the matter.**

This guide briefly explains what happens now and what the possible outcomes might be. However, for the full detail of the process, you should take a moment to read the Academic Integrity Policy and the associated procedure available on Portal (go to <http://portal.chester.ac.uk/aqss> and click on 'Academic Integrity').

### **Stage 1: Allegation**

You will have received a letter from your department inviting you to a meeting to discuss the work that has been submitted. Along with the letter, you will have received a form which gives details of the allegation and a copy of all of the evidence that the department has considered when deciding to make that allegation. **You must read all of the information carefully.** If you do not understand anything, you should ask the department to clarify.

### **Stage 2: Meeting with the Department**

The meeting is part of an investigation that the department must carry out to decide if the allegation should go further. It gives the department an opportunity to explain the allegation to you and for you to say anything that you feel is relevant. You might also want to make a written response to the allegation that can be discussed during the meeting. You have the right to be accompanied to the meeting by a friend (as long as they are also a member of the University). The Students' Union can also give you advice if you need it and you may want to speak to them after the meeting, before you make a formal response to the allegation.

### **Stage 3: Outcome of the Department Investigation**

At the end of the meeting, the department representative will decide, based on the evidence available and your response, whether there is a case to answer for a breach of the Academic Integrity Policy. If they decide that there is sufficient evidence, the department representative will make a recommendation about how they believe your work breaches the policy. Possible breaches of the policy are categorised in one of two ways:

<b>Unacceptable academic practice</b>	<b>Academic misconduct</b>
Includes (but is not limited to): Plagiarism Reuse of previously submitted material Collusion	Includes (but is not limited to): Commissioning Falsification Research misconduct Dishonesty/cheating

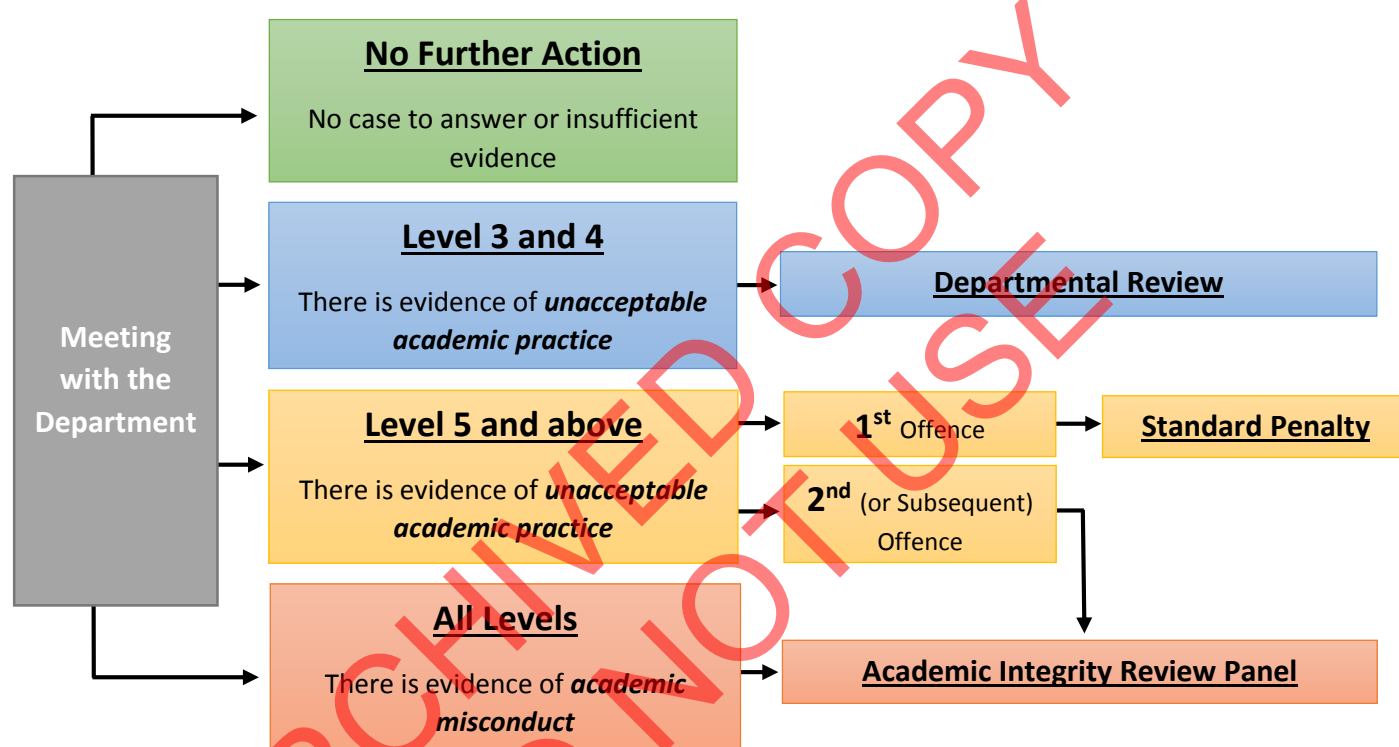
You will have the opportunity to state whether you accept the outcome of the department's investigation, disagree with the findings or if you want more time to think about your decision. The decision you make at this point helps to determine what the next steps will be.

If you do not attend the meeting with the department, or if you want more time to think about whether or not to accept the department's finding, you will have 7 days following the date of the meeting in which to do this. If you fail to respond, it might be assumed that you are accepting the finding and any subsequent penalty.

## Next Steps

If the department representative decides that there is no case to answer, the matter will end. No further action will be taken and you will be given a provisional mark in the normal way. However, if the department decides that there is a case to answer, what happens next depends on your level of study, the type of breach of the Academic Integrity Policy that has been alleged (either unacceptable academic practice or academic misconduct), your response to the department's investigation and whether you have been found to have breached the Academic Integrity Policy in the past.

The diagram below shows the possible outcomes following your meeting with the department. Which of these outcomes will apply in your case will depend on a number of factors which are explained later in this guidance.



### Departmental Review (Level 3 or 4 only)

If the department decide that there is sufficient evidence to show that your work breaches the Academic Integrity Policy by means of unacceptable academic practice, you will still be entitled to a mark. However, the marker will disregard all of the elements of your work that are in breach of the Academic Integrity Policy and the provisional mark you receive will be based only on the remainder. Therefore, you should expect the mark to be much lower than it would otherwise have been.

If you disagree with the department's findings, you might be able to request an independent review. To do this, you must normally have attended the meeting with the department to discuss the allegation and you must have good reason for disagreeing; it is not acceptable to say that the department were mistaken without having a compelling reason. You should contact the Student Affairs team in AQSS by emailing [academicintegrity@chester.ac.uk](mailto:academicintegrity@chester.ac.uk) if you want to request an independent review.

### **Standard Penalty (Level 5 and above)**

If the department finds that there is evidence to show that you have breached the Academic Integrity Policy at **Level 5 or above**, to be eligible for a **standard penalty**:

1. The suspected breach of the Academic Integrity Policy must be one of **unacceptable academic practice only**.
2. You must have accepted the outcome of the department's investigation;
3. You must not have previously breached the Academic Integrity Policy at Level 5 or higher; and
4. The piece of work in question must either be your first or second attempt at assessment.

If any of these do not apply or if there is any doubt, the case must be heard by an Academic Integrity Review Panel.

If you are eligible, your case will be considered by a subgroup of the Academic Integrity Review Panel and you will not be required to attend a hearing. If the subgroup confirms that your work does breach the Academic Integrity Policy, you will be given the opportunity to complete the online **Academic Integrity Course** within 21 days. You will receive an email to your University of Chester account with further details.

If you successfully complete and pass the test at the end of the Academic Integrity Course, you will be entitled to a provisional mark for the work you have submitted. However, the marker will disregard all of the elements of your work that are in breach of the Academic Integrity Policy and the provisional mark you receive will be based only on the remainder. Therefore, you should expect the mark to be much lower than it would otherwise have been.

It will always be in your best interests to engage with the Academic Integrity Course and attempt the test. Failure to either successfully complete or engage with the course would result in you receiving a mark of zero for the piece of work or entire module respectively.

### **Academic Integrity Review Panel (All Levels)**

If the matter cannot be resolved through a departmental review, standard penalty or if there is an allegation of **academic misconduct**, it will be referred to a hearing of the Academic Integrity Review Panel.

If this happens, AQSS will write to you to give you the date and time of the hearing and you will be invited to attend and/or make a written submission.

If you would normally have been eligible for a standard penalty, but you want to contest the allegation, the case will need to be heard by an Academic Integrity Review Panel. However, if the case is proven, the maximum penalty available will still be the standard penalty (see above).