

Academic Integrity Matters:

The University takes breaches of Academic Integrity very seriously. If you have been sent a notice of initial review or inquiry notice, this blog can assist you with what you need to know about the process.

There are generally two main steps to the investigation process. Usually, the process will start with an initial review; however, in some circumstances, the course convenor can decide to forego the Initial Review and request an Inquiry be held instead. The information on this page is in line with the [Academic Integrity Rule 2021](#).

1. Initial Review

Commonly, the first step in determining if Academic Misconduct has occurred is to conduct an Initial Review. Your course convenor will send you a 'notice of initial review' within 5 working days of deciding to conduct a review. This notice will be sent to you via email.

This notice should contain:

- The allegation (whether it is plagiarism, collusion etc.)
- The proof of the allegation (they should include an attachment of your work, and show clearly where the issue is)
- The fact that they would like to meet with you to discuss. This date cannot be less than 5 working days of when you are sent this notice (to give you time to prepare).
- If you choose to submit a written statement, a timeframe when you should do so.
- Your rights at this review.
- The link to the Academic Integrity Rule 2021.

Following this notice, you can choose to be present at the meeting, or you can choose to submit a written statement instead of attending the meeting. If you decide not to attend the meeting or provide a written statement, the course convenor will decide based on the current information available to them.

You can also submit a written statement AND be present at the meeting should you feel more prepared this way.

If you choose to attend the meeting, you would usually respond to confirm. You also have the option to propose a different time from what they've suggested if you're unavailable at the time suggested.

At the Initial Review meeting

Currently, initial reviews are conducted via Zoom. A link will be sent to you before the meeting date.

The meeting aims to determine whether there is substance to the allegation; if there is substance, whether the alleged conduct constitutes poor academic practice or potential academic misconduct. The course convenor must act fairly and give the student a reasonable opportunity to be heard in relation to the allegation.

You are welcome to bring a support person and any supporting documentation you may have. If you intend to have a support person with you, it is good practice to let the convenor know beforehand so that they know to expect another person at the meeting.

Following this meeting, three potential outcomes can occur, and they are:

Initial Review Outcomes:

1. Termination of the process - this is when they believe nothing has taken place or a minor breach has occurred. In most cases, no penalty is imposed, and the process ends here.
2. Poor Academic Practice – this is when the course convenor believes that the conduct is a breach of the Rules, but it is excusable due to mitigating circumstances (including personal, emotional, or health-related circumstances); or was due to unintended, careless, inadvertent or uninformed behaviour.
3. Escalation to an Inquiry – this is when the course convenor believes that the conduct may constitute as Academic Misconduct, and therefore, further investigation needs to be conducted.

The course convenor cannot give you an outcome of Academic Misconduct at this Initial Review stage. If the outcome is a termination of the process, or poor academic practice, this will be communicated to you via email, and any relevant penalties will also be included in this email. The process would end here should the outcome be termination or poor academic practice.

If the outcome is an escalation to an inquiry, you will receive another email from the inquiry officer at a later date to notify you of the upcoming inquiry.

Penalties for Poor Academic Practice:

If Poor Academic Practice is found, the penalties can be one or a combination of the following:

- (a) decide to take no action;
- (b) counsel the student;
- (c) reprimand the student;
- (d) accept an undertaking from the student, including, for example, an undertaking to undertake counselling or academic integrity training;
- (e) require the student to submit material for re-assessment;
- (f) require the student to undertake a further examination or other assessment;
- (g) subject to subsection (3), reduce the student's mark for the relevant examination or other assessment by no more than 25% of the mark available for the assessment;
- (h) tell any relevant professional, government or other organisation or agency about the finding and any action taken in relation to it.

(3) However, under subsection (2)(g) the course convener may reduce the student's mark by no more than 10% of the mark available for the assessment if the student's conduct is in relation to coursework undertaken by the student during the first 48 units of a program for an undergraduate coursework award.

2. Inquiry

You will receive an Inquiry Notice, and the notice will contain very similar information to what is in the Initial Review Notice above. However, the main difference this time is that the matter is now being reviewed by someone else higher up (an inquiry officer). This is usually one of the Associate Deans of the College.

At the Inquiry Meeting:

The aim of the inquiry is very similar to the Initial Review meeting, where you are given the opportunity to discuss your case with the Associate Dean of the College. You can bring any supporting documentation you may have to support your case and a support person if you choose to do so.

Inquiry Outcomes:

1. Termination of the process – this is when they believe nothing has taken place or a minor breach has occurred. In most cases, no penalty is imposed, and the process ends here.

2. Poor Academic Practice – this is when the Associate Dean believes that the conduct is a breach of the Rules, but it is excusable due to mitigating circumstances (including personal, emotional, or health-related circumstances); or was due to unintended, careless, inadvertent or uninformed behaviour.

3. Academic Misconduct – this is where the Associate Dean believes that the breach is serious enough to be constituted as Academic Misconduct.

Penalties for Academic Misconduct:

It can be one or a combination of the following:

- (a) decide to take no action;
- (b) reprimand the student;
- (c) require the student to submit material for re-assessment and impose conditions on the re-assessment (including, for example, a condition limiting the grade that may be awarded on the re-assessment);
- (d) require the student to undertake a further examination or other assessment and impose conditions on the further assessment (including, for example, a condition limiting the grade that may be awarded for the further assessment);
- (e) reduce the mark for any examination or other assessment of the student, including to fail;
- (f) reduce a course grade of the student for a course, including to fail;
- (g) deny the student access to all or any University facilities, to all University premises, any University premises or any part of University premises, or to all or any activities conducted by or on behalf of the University, for a specified period of no longer than 12 months;
- (h) suspend the candidature or enrolment of the student in a program or course in which the student is admitted or enrolled, and prohibit the resumption of candidature or enrolment, for a specified period of no longer than 12 months;

- (i) determine conditions under which the student may attend classes or lessons, use any facility of the University, or otherwise continue the student's studies or research program;
- (j) require the student to apologise, or take the other action the inquiry officer considers appropriate, with a view to mitigating the effect of the academic misconduct;
- (k) require the student to undertake specified counselling or academic integrity training;
- (l) require the student to make specified corrections or revisions to a specified thesis, publication, research finding or other material;
- (m) accept an undertaking from the student, including, for example, an undertaking to undertake counselling or academic integrity training;
- (n) tell any relevant professional, government or other organisation or agency about the finding and any action taken in relation to it;
- (o) refer the student's conduct to the Registrar under section 34(3) (Changes in inquiry officer).

In the rare occasion that the inquiry officer is the Vice-Chancellor, the Vice-Chancellor may apply a different set of penalties. If the Vice-Chancellor or their delegate conducts your inquiry, it would be best to contact the ANUSA Student Assistance Team for assistance.

Appeals

You have the right to appeal any of the outcomes or penalties imposed. This appeal would be in line with the [ANU Appeals Rule 2021](#). If you are interested in appealing the decision, it is best for you to seek help from the ANUSA Student Assistance Team.

Things to keep in mind:

The proceeding and its outcomes will be recorded in your ANU Unofficial Transcript. This Unofficial Transcript is only accessible by academics and administrative staff at ANU.

The outcomes of Poor Academic Practice or Academic Misconduct will not be in your official transcript when you graduate.

However, some universities or employers may require you to disclose this in your application, and if it is requested, you will have to disclose it to them.

Contact us:

If you need more assistance, require a support person, or someone to review your statement, you are welcome to contact the Student Assistance Team at sa.assistance@anu.edu.au