



What happens if I have been accused of an assessment offence?

Assessment Offences

If you have been sent an email or letter accusing you of an assessment offence, please get in touch with the ARU Students' Union Advice Service for help and support as soon as you can, the Advisers can help you decide what to do next. [The Academic Regulations](#) have all the information you should need about allegations of assessment offences, please do read up on this to help you prepare what to do next. An assessment offence is defined as a situation where 'a student has sought to gain unfair academic advantage in the assessment process for him/herself or another student'.

Forms of Assessment Offences

These include:

- › Breaching regulations relating to exams
- › Impersonating another candidate
- › Submitting someone else's work as one's own
- › Falsifying data
- › Unauthorised and unattributed submission of an assessment item produced by another

Plagiarism/Collusion

Plagiarism is a term used when a student has submitted work as their own but which has been copied from another source, *without acknowledgement*. This could be from another student, a publication or from the internet.

Collusion occurs when two or more students collaborate to produce a piece of work and the work is submitted for assessment as the work of one student alone. If you are required, within the structure of a module, to work with other students in pursuit of an assignment, this group activity is regarded as approved collaboration. However, if there is a requirement for the submitted work to be solely that of an individual, joint authorship is not permitted.



'a student has sought to gain unfair academic advantage in the assessment process for him/herself or another student'.

How accusations are made

- › If the allegation arises during an exam, the invigilator will inform you of his/her suspicion and mark your answer book accordingly. He/she will then make a report to your Director of Studies.
- › If the allegation arises during the marking of a written assessment, the Module Leader will be informed and a report will be sent to your Director of Studies.
- › If the Director of Studies decides that the alleged offence is a question of poor academic practice, you will be referred for academic counselling.
- › If the Director of Studies decides that there is a case to answer the allegation progresses to a full investigation by the Faculty.
- › Within 20 working days of being notified of the alleged offence, the Director of Studies sends all documentary evidence with a request for you to respond within 15 working days, either accepting or denying the allegation.
- › If you do not respond, it will be assumed that you admit to the allegation. Please speak to one of the SU Advisers who can talk you through your options which can help you decide what to do and how to respond.
- › An assessment offence for which new evidence comes to light after the 20 working days reporting window (30 working days for Major Project modules) can be investigated and progressed.

Penalties

A range of penalties exist which are implemented according to:

- › The academic level at which the offence occurred;
- › Whether the offence occurred at the initial assessment or re-assessment stage of a module;
- › Whether the offence is admitted by the student during Stage 1 of the Assessment Offences process
- › Whether the offence is proved through a Panel hearing during Stage 2 of the Assessments Offences process.

Penalties are complex and full details can be found in the [Academic Regulations Section 10](#).

Panel Hearing

If you deny the assessment offence allegation you will be referred to an Assessment Offence Panel Hearing. If you are invited to this type of panel hearing please contact an ARU Students' Union Adviser and they will be able to help you prepare for the hearing and will be able to attend with you if you are happy for them to be there.

You will be informed of the decision of the Panel at the conclusion of the meeting. You will also be notified in writing within 10 working days.

The Panel's decision will be forwarded to the Faculty Awards Board for implementation. In all cases where an assessment offence has been proved, you should expect to be interviewed by your Dean of Faculty, please contact the SU Advice Service if you would like an Adviser to help you prepare for this meeting, they can also attend the meeting with you for support if you would like them to.

Appeal against the decision of the Panel

If you are not happy with the decision of the panel hearing, you may complain to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator. For these purposes, the final communication to the student also serves as the 'Completion of Procedures Letter' required under the OIA procedures. [More info on the OIA can be found here](#).

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Chelmsford

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