

Guidance for the Reported Student (Academic Conduct Cases)

CONTENTS

1. Introduction	2
2. What is academic integrity and why is it important?	2
3. What is academic misconduct?	2
4. Why has my work been referred?	2
4.1. Academic Conduct Breaches:	3
5. My work has been referred, what are the next steps?	3
5.1. No Case to Answer	3
5.2. Referral to the Centre for Academic Development (CAD)	3
5.3. Academic Conduct Investigation	4
6. Academic Conduct Interview	4
6.1. Preparing for Your Academic Conduct Interview	4
6.2. What Happens During an Academic Conduct Interview	5
6.3 Tips for a Successful Interview	5
7. Case Decision and Possible Outcomes	6
7.1. Notification of Outcome	6
8. Penalties	6
9. University Conduct Committee	7
10. Appealing an Academic Conduct Decision	7
Appendix A - Academic Conduct Process Map	8

1. Introduction

As a student, it's important to uphold high academic standards and avoid any form of academic misconduct.

This document has been created by the Student Investigation and Resolution Team (SIRT) to help explain the Academic Conduct process. This includes what to expect and where you can find support.

We appreciate that allegations of academic misconduct can be unsettling. Therefore, at Oxford Brookes, we aim to provide a fair and supportive experience for all students involved in the process.

2. What is academic integrity and why is it important?

Academic integrity is about being honest and fair in your work. It means doing your own assignments, avoiding cheating or copying, and giving proper credit to others' ideas. Maintaining integrity ensures that everyone is assessed fairly and based on their own efforts. This allows the grades and qualifications awarded to truly reflect your own knowledge and skills.

Academic integrity is more complex than it seems. It is important that you have a good understanding of this before you complete your assessments. We encourage all students to complete the University's [Academic Integrity Moodle Course](#). This will provide you with the knowledge and skills needed to understand the importance of academic integrity. The [Centre for Academic Development](#) are also available to support you. The team can help you with your academic writing and avoiding academic integrity concerns.

3. What is academic misconduct?

Academic misconduct is any dishonest behaviour that gives a student an unfair advantage. It damages the trust and integrity of academic work and weakens the value of the University's qualifications. This can undermine your learning experience and is unfair to other students who have followed the rules.

The [Academic Conduct procedure](#) is in place to promote a fair and consistent process for all students. This explains how the University investigates and resolves cases of suspected academic misconduct. It is important to understand the University's rules so that you can avoid any issues with your own work.

4. Why has my work been referred?

If a marker believes that you may be in breach of the Academic Conduct procedure, your work will be referred to SIRT for initial assessment.

Information about the types of breaches and how to avoid them can be found by accessing the [Academic Conduct Breaches document](#).

4.1. Academic Conduct Breaches:

Plagiarism	Falsification	Collusion
Actions which enable another student to copy	Gaining access to unauthorised material	Custom writing services
Duplication	Failure to obtain ethics approval	Misuse of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

5. My work has been referred, what are the next steps?

- Your marker will not give you a grade for the assessment until the outcome of the referral has been decided. A temporary 'DD' holding grade will show on your Student Record page.
- Your Turnitin feedback will show a message from your marker advising you that your work has been referred and to wait for SIRT to contact you.
- Your case will be assigned to one of SIRT's Conduct Officers to investigate the case. The Conduct Officer will review your work and determine whether the work is problematic. The Conduct Officer will then decide which of the following routes to take:
 1. 'No case to answer'
 2. A referral to Centre for Academic Development
 3. Academic Conduct investigation

5.1. No Case to Answer

The Conduct Officer may decide that no breach of the procedures has taken place. If so, they will send you a letter via email. This will explain the reason for the alleged breach, and why the Conduct Officer decided that no further action was required. The referrer of the case will be informed of your outcome, and your work will then be marked as normal.

5.2. Referral to the Centre for Academic Development (CAD)

If it's your first year at Oxford Brookes, and this is your first referral, an Academic Conduct Interview may not be necessary. For minor instances, you may instead be referred for more training on academic integrity.

If this is the case, the Conduct Officer will let you know via email. The [Centre for Academic Development \(CAD\)](#) will then contact you to arrange the training:

1. You'll need to complete the [Academic Integrity Moodle Course](#).
2. You'll also need to book and attend 'Good Academic Practice' workshop (CAD will email you the details of how you can book this).

This training is mandatory, and your grade will be marked as 'DD' until you complete it. If you don't finish the training within 6 weeks, your assessment will be capped at a pass grade.

5.3. Academic Conduct Investigation

If this isn't your first referral to SIRT, or if the suspected breach is more serious, a full Academic Conduct investigation will take place.

The Conduct Officer will review all the available evidence, including:

- Manually checking your work
- Assessing reasons for the referral
- Reviewing assessment instructions
- Examining the Turnitin report
- Cross-referencing sources
- Checking your data analysis

You will then be invited to attend an Academic Conduct interview.

6. Academic Conduct Interview

6.1. Preparing for Your Academic Conduct Interview

You'll be invited to an Academic Conduct interview via email. This will include which assessment has been referred and the alleged breach. It will also inform you of the time and date of the interview, which is usually held online via Google Meets (you'll receive the link to the meeting via email). You can request an in-person interview by emailing the Conduct Officer.

To prepare for your interview, please do the following:

- Confirm your attendance to the interview as soon as possible.
 - If you can't attend, let the Conduct Officer know. Please provide the reason and any supporting evidence. If you do not provide a valid reason for not attending, the case may be heard in your absence.
- Let the Conduct Officer know if there are any particular adjustments or arrangements that you need. This can be for the Academic Conduct process, or the interview itself.
- Let the Conduct Officer know if you would like someone to attend with you for support (this cannot be a lawyer, or anyone who is involved in the case).
- Gather as much evidence as possible to support your case. You can share it with the Conduct Officer before, during, or after the interview. Useful evidence includes:
 - **Drafts and notes:** Show the development of your ideas.
 - **Time-stamped files:** Prove when you created different versions of your work.
 - **Creative process statement:** Explain how you developed your ideas and ensured originality.
 - **Research sources:** Provide a list of sources and screenshots of your research history.
 - **Communication records:** Share any discussions you had with peers, lecturers, or mentors.
 - **Evidence of challenges:** Include any relevant circumstances you faced during the assessment.

Please ensure that you use a laptop (not a phone) for the interview, as the Conduct Officer may share their screen with you. Make sure you're in a quiet, private space with your camera on.

We understand this can feel formal, but don't panic - there is support available. Make sure you understand why your work was referred so you can clearly respond to the concerns raised.

The [Centre for Academic Development \(CAD\)](#) can review your assignment and help identify what went wrong. Even if you can't meet with CAD before the interview, it's still helpful to schedule an appointment to improve your academic skills.

The [Brookes Union Advice Service](#) can provide support and guidance for the process and interview.

If you are unsure on the reason for referral, the overall process or would like some additional guidance or advice, please consider contacting:

- [Student Investigation and Resolution Team](#)
- [Student Support Co-ordinators](#)
- [Academic Advisor](#)
- **Your Module Leader**

6.2. What Happens During an Academic Conduct Interview

Introduction: The Conduct Officer will introduce themselves and explain why you're there. They will also outline the process and possible outcomes.

Presentation of Allegation: The Conduct Officer will explain the alleged misconduct and review the problematic parts of your work with you.

Your Chance to Explain:

- Explain your side, clear up misunderstandings, or admit mistakes.
- Discuss any exceptional circumstances you faced when completing the work.
- Present any evidence (e.g., drafts, notes, emails) that supports your case.

Follow-up Questions: The Conduct Officer may ask you further questions. This is to understand your actions, intentions, and awareness of academic integrity.

Closing Statements: You can make final comments or provide additional evidence. The Conduct Officer will summarise key points and explain the next steps. This may include potential outcomes.

6.3 Tips for a Successful Interview

- **Be Honest:** Admitting mistakes can lead to a more open discussion, and possibly a better outcome.
- **Be Prepared:** Review the evidence and gather any supporting documents.
- **Understand the Procedure:** Read the [Academic Conduct procedure](#) before the interview. This will help you to understand the process and the expectations regarding academic integrity.

7. Case Decision and Possible Outcomes

After the interview, the Conduct Officer will review all aspects of the case. They will then determine if you are in breach of the procedure and decide an appropriate outcome. All decisions are made on the balance of probabilities (this means what is more likely than not).

The Conduct Officer will consider:

- The extent of the breach
- Your admission or denial of misconduct
- Your intent to gain an advantage
- Whether you knowingly received help or used unauthorised materials
- Any challenges you faced (e.g. exceptional circumstances)
- How you responded to the evidence
- What you learned from the experience
- How you would handle a similar situation in the future
- What steps you'll take to prevent this from happening again

7.1. Notification of Outcome

The Conduct Officer will email you the decision, usually within 5 working days of the interview. In some cases, it may be longer than 5 working days, but you will be kept updated. The outcome will be either:

- Your work is found **not in breach**. Your work can then be marked as normal.
- Your work is found **in breach**. You will then be awarded one (or more) penalties. These are listed in the [Academic Conduct procedure](#).

8. Penalties

a) An absolute discharge. This means that the student technically breached the regulation, but no blame should be attached to them.

b) A formal warning advising the student about future behaviour. The breach will be recorded by SIRT and reviewed if further issues arise.

c) A requirement to correct a piece of coursework by a prescribed return deadline for a reduced or capped mark. Failure to meet the prescribed return deadline will result in a mark of zero for the relevant module or coursework.

d) A reduction of marks for the assessment or module. A reduction in 5 to 20 percentage points depending on the severity of the breach.

e) Zero marks: No marks for the assessment/module, **possibly with no resit opportunity**. Future attempts will be capped at a pass mark (40 for undergrad, 50 for postgrad).

The Conduct Officer may also recommend that you engage in a specified form of support. For example, to complete the [Academic Integrity Moodle Course](#). Alternatively, this could be a requirement to participate in a different University procedure (e.g. the Support to Study process).

9. University Conduct Committee

In some cases, the Conduct Officer may consider that a breach is very serious and warrants a higher penalty than "zero marks with no resit". If so, the Conduct Officer can refer your case to the University Conduct Committee.

In a University Conduct Committee, a Panel will review your case, and you will have a chance to respond to the allegations. The Panel will decide whether a breach has occurred, and if so, they will issue an appropriate penalty. These are more serious and can include:

- **Restricting the maximum award you can achieve.**
- **Withholding/withdrawing credit or awards.**
- **Lowering your degree class or GPA.**
- **Temporary withdrawal or expulsion.**

10. Appealing an Academic Conduct Decision

You can appeal the Conduct Officer's and/or the University Conduct Committee's outcome. To do so, you must follow the formal process:

Identify the ground(s) for your appeal:

- (a) The student would like to present new evidence that they could not have reasonably produced before the conduct interview or University Conduct Committee;
- (b) There was a procedural irregularity;
- (c) The decision regarding liability was not fairly or reasonably made; The penalty is unfairly disproportionate to the breach.

Appeal Process:

You must submit a written appeal via this [Appeal Committee Request Form](#) within 10 working days. This must clearly state the appeal grounds and your reason why you believe these grounds have been met. All supporting evidence must also be included.

Review and Outcome:

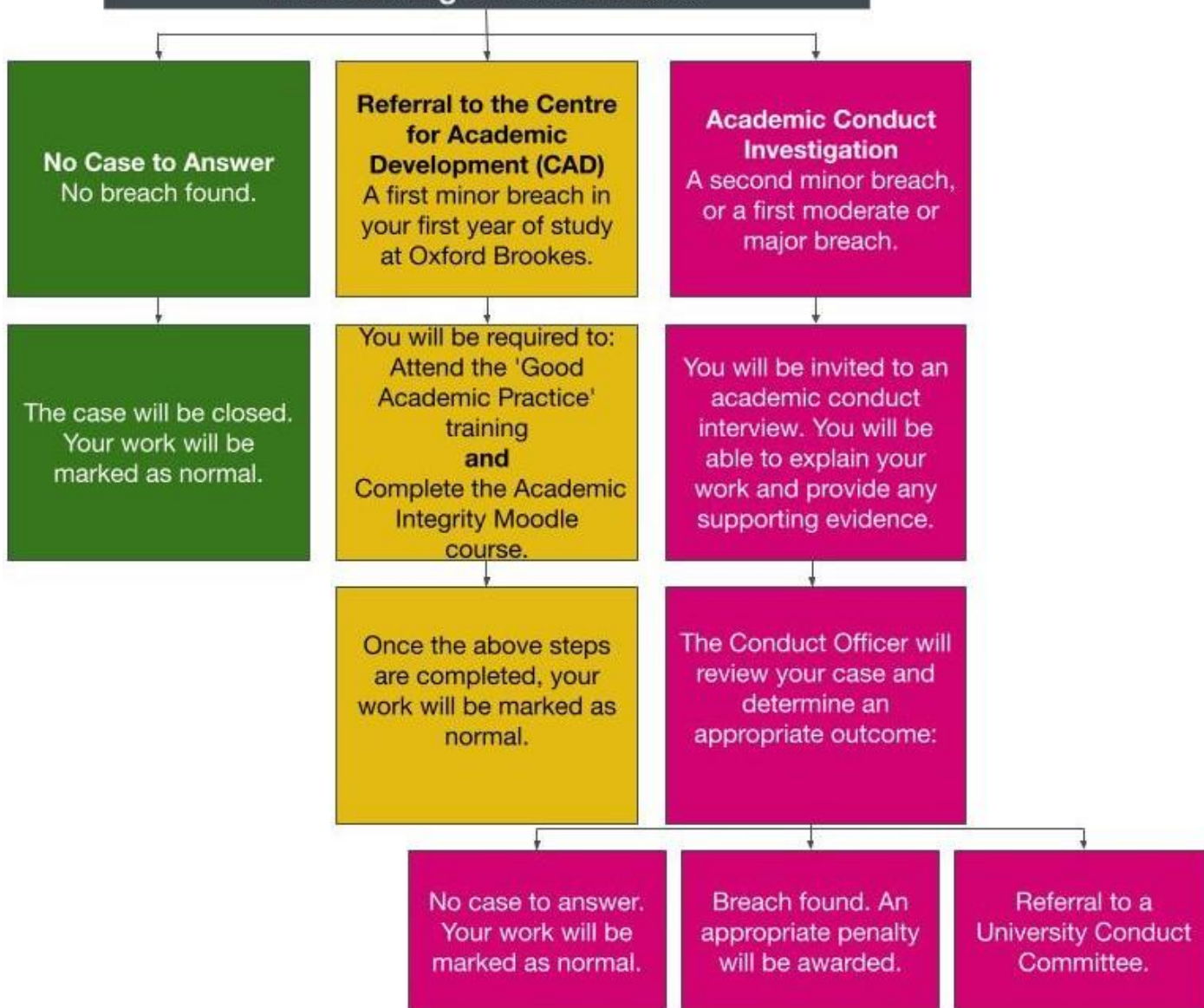
If the appeal request is determined to be valid, your case will proceed to an Appeal Committee for review. The Panel of the Appeal Committee may uphold, overturn, or recommend further investigation.

Once the University's internal process has been exhausted, you will be issued a "Completion of Procedures" letter. If you remain dissatisfied about the outcome of your case, you can escalate this to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA). Your letter will tell you how you can do this, and the steps you need to take.

Appendix A - Academic Conduct Process Map

Academic Conduct Process

SIRT will assess your work and decide which of the following 3 routes to take:



Academic Conduct Process

SIRT will assess your work and decide which of the following 3 routes to take:

No Case to Answer

No breach found.

- The case will be closed. Your work will be marked as normal.

Referral to the Centre for Academic Development (CAD)

A first minor breach in your first year of study at Oxford Brookes.

- You will be required to: Attend the 'Good Academic Practice' workshop and Complete the Academic Integrity Moodle course.
 - Once the above steps are completed, your work will be marked as normal.

Academic Conduct Investigation

A second minor breach, or a first moderate or major breach.

- You will be invited to an academic conduct interview. You will be able to explain your work and provide any supporting evidence.
 - The Conduct Officer will review your case and determine an appropriate outcome:
 - No case to answer. Your work will be marked as normal.
 - Breach found. An appropriate penalty will be awarded.
 - Referral to a University Conduct Committee.