

Options in your response to a suspected Academic Integrity breach

All aspects of our lives have been changed by the current health crisis.

These changes are reflected in the way some suspected breaches of Academic Integrity are reviewed.

If you have received an email about a suspected breach of the Academic Integrity policy, you may also have been offered the chance to either:

- **Option 1 Accept a penalty** (the general level of the penalty should be described in the letter); *or*
- **Option 2 Submit a student statement** to the Academic Integrity Officer for consideration; *or*
- **Option 3 Attend a video conference** meeting with the Academic Integrity Officer

We advise you to follow the **TWO STEPS** below upon receipt of this email when deciding which options to choose.



STEP ONE - Making your decision

Take a moment to reflect on your options before deciding which approach is best for you:

Option	Potential Pros / Benefits	Potential Cons / Disadvantages	Consider First...
Option 1 Accept the penalty without writing a statement or attending a meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A chance for a quicker outcome• You decide when and how to reflect on any lessons learnt• Being free to focus on other upcoming assessments	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The decision may not be informed by any evidence that you may wish to submit• Your motivation to reflect on lessons learnt may decrease once you have an outcome• Moving on without learning the right lessons may result in repeat breaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Was this a breach and do you know why?• If this was a breach – do you know the contributing factors?• What would help you avoid making future mistakes?
Option 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Shows engagement and understanding of your responsibilities as a learner.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• More work for you	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What do you have to say regarding the context to the suspected breach?



<p>Draft and submit a student statement with the support of an impartial adviser from the Advice Centre</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A chance to reflect on any mistakes and get feedback on where you went wrong• Student statements can inform a clear plan to learn lessons before moving on to your next assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Time set aside for upcoming assessments could be lost• An impact on the AIO decision/outcome is not guaranteed• This may result in a more severe penalty being applied than that which was originally proposed	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is a written submission the best way for you to make your key points?• Can you manage this additional task within the context of your current workload?• Is this evidence that should be submitted to a Special Considerations Board/Academic Appeal rather than the Academic Integrity Officer?
<p>Option 3</p> <p>Attend a meeting with the Academic Integrity Officer</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• You and the Academic Integrity Officer can have a conversation• Questions can be asked as they arise and you will have the chance to offer a clear response	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Meetings can feel stressful• You will need to engage with the practical arrangements• It may take longer to obtain an outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What do you wish to say that could not be included in a student statement and how can this conversation help more than other sources of advice?• What questions might you have for the Academic Integrity Officer?



	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Specific concerns about your work may be picked up in the meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• This may result in a more severe penalty being applied than that which was originally proposed	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Are you disputing any elements of the suspected breach?
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STEP TWO: Letting people know

Option 1

If you have decided to accept the penalty:

- Respond to the Curriculum and Quality Assurance team with your decision by the deadline given
- Update the SUSU Advice Centre if they have been supporting you
- If you have been helped by an adviser, let them know when the outcome is confirmed

Option 2

If you have decided to submit a student statement for consideration:

- Respond to the Curriculum and Quality Assurance team with your decision by the deadline given

- Update the SUSU Advice Centre if they have been supporting you
- Being mindful of deadlines – take steps to draft your student statement

Be clear: the purpose of a student statement is not to offer mitigation or justification for any suspected breach. In some circumstances it may be appropriate to apply for Special Considerations or Academic Appeal. The SUSU Advice Centre and/or your PAT can advise on this.

The general aim of a student statement regarding a suspected Academic Integrity breach is to:

- Clarify whether a breach has occurred and if it has, how it happened
- Provide relevant context when a breach has occurred
- Set out steps taken (and any future steps) to reduce the likelihood of a repeat breach

Our guide on what may be helpful to include in your draft student statement can be found [here](#)

Our guide to sources of support and resources for future breach-free study can be found [here](#)

Send your draft student statement for feedback (along with your Turnitin Report and any emails received from the CQA team) either to advice@susu.org or to the adviser who has been supporting you.

Option 3

If you have decided to request a video conference meeting:

- Respond to the Curriculum and Quality Assurance team with your decision by the deadline given
- Update the SUSU Advice Centre if they have been supporting you



Support Advice Centre

- Follow all the steps set out for **Option 2**

Your student statement can be your 'script' for when you take part in the video conference meeting with the Academic Integrity Officer.

Once you have a confirmed date for your video conference meeting you should update where relevant:

- The SUSU Advice Centre at advice@susu.org or the adviser who has been supporting you
- Your PAT

For further information regarding Academic Integrity:

Advice on Academic Integrity and academic writing from the library can be accessed [here](#)

The Advice Centre academic advice guides are located [here](#)

Advice and guidance for Academic Integrity when studying online can be accessed [here](#)

For further information regarding the SUSU Advice Centre service:

For information and support, follow this [link](#)

For information on confidentiality and to find out more about our service, follow this [link](#)