



Academic Integrity guide

The aim of this guide is to help you prepare for any Academic Integrity meetings. It also outlines how the Advice Centre can help in the process. It includes a short summary of the procedure, which the University will follow to investigate any suspected plagiarism or other Academic Integrity breaches.

Advice Alert!

The Academic Skills Hub in the Hartley Library is a good resource providing help and guidance on all aspects of academic writing. They also have helpful guides on academic writing and other aspects of academic integrity. You will find details of their drop-in service and a number of useful resources here:

<http://library.soton.ac.uk/sash>

The University has [Academic Integrity regulations](#) and procedures for when a breach of these regulations happens. It is important that before attending any Academic Integrity meetings you read and understand these regulations. You will find them on the University's website [here](#).

If you have received notification from your Faculty that a potential Academic Integrity breach has been found in your work, it is likely to include an invitation to an Academic Integrity meeting. To ensure you get the best possible outcome you need to prepare.

Preparing for a meeting about Academic Integrity – how can the Advice Centre help?

An invitation to a meeting to discuss a possible breach of Academic Integrity may be a cause of anxiety.

Remember – the meeting is your opportunity to say what has happened, to reflect on any mistakes made and learn valuable lessons.

While it is normal and natural for your initial focus to be on the outcome, the best way to influence any decision is to prepare, and to seek support and guidance.

You can obtain support from the Advice Centre with:

- Help drafting a statement for any Academic Integrity meeting
- Support in any Academic Integrity meetings (you have the right to be accompanied)



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- Discussing options after you have received an outcome

Action plan for getting help and preparing for an Academic Integrity meeting

Step 1

Contact the Advice Centre to book an Adviser appointment and alert us to the times and dates of any Academic Integrity meetings to which you have been invited.

Step 2

Before the meeting with your Adviser at the Advice Centre:

- Read the Academic Integrity Regulations
- Gather information concerning the alleged breach (such as the Turnitin report or any relevant emails sent to you by the University)
- Draft a statement before your Adviser appointment (either bring this to the meeting or email it to advice@susu.org)

Step 3

When drafting a statement for your appointment it is important that you have consulted our Statement Guide [here](#)

Top Tip!

A good **Academic Integrity statement** may include:

- Confirmation that you have read and understood the Academic Integrity regulations - if this is true
- Clarity on whether you now consider you may have breached the regulations and whether any breaches were intentional or unintentional
- Details of information about Academic Integrity you received before the alleged breach
- Relevant mitigation - this should not form the main focus of your statement
- Nothing about the outcome you are seeking - this section of the statement writing guide would not normally apply to an alleged Academic Integrity breach



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Step 4

If any changes are required to your statement after your initial appointment with your Adviser, make sure you send the second draft to the Adviser as soon as possible.

Summary of the Academic Integrity procedures

Any suspected breach is initially considered by an Academic Integrity Officer. The officer may look at your previous work and also ask the faculty if you had any breaches in the past.

If you did not have previous AI problems and the breach is small, limited in scope, and committed due to inexperience it may be considered **minor**. In this case the Officer will notify the marker and ask that the issues are highlighted to you through the normal feedback process.

In any other cases, where the AI issue is considered to be more serious, or you had a previous warning on your file, you will most likely be invited to an Academic Integrity meeting.

Remember!

During all Academic Integrity stages, you may be accompanied to meetings or hearings by another member of the University (usually either a member of staff or a fellow student), or by one of the Advisers from the Advice Centre.

If you want Adviser to accompany you, you must contact the Advice Centre in advance.

An Academic Integrity meeting is organised for major breaches, for example with large amounts of plagiarised text, exam regulations breaches or if you already had an AI warning before. The purpose of the meeting is to find out the reasons for the breach and also to help you understand how you should maintain Academic Integrity in future.

If you want to find out more on how the meeting will be run, the University's interactive resource here may be helpful:

http://edshare.soton.ac.uk/19389/2/story_html5.html



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The outcomes of the meeting can be that:

- The AIO finds there was no breach, or
- The AIO finds there was a breach and imposes one or more of the penalties listed in the Academic Integrity regulations, or requests that the Academic Integrity Panel is convened to decide on the penalty, or
- The AIO refers your case directly to the Academic Integrity Panel without making any findings.

Academic Integrity Panel is set up if the AIO imposes a penalty that has an impact on the whole degree, or they feel that the case should be determined by a consensus of a senior panel of academics. You can also request to have an Academic Integrity Panel meeting if you dispute the findings or penalty imposed by the AIO. An Academic Integrity Panel involves a meeting with at least 3 panel members and yourself. You will be invited to explain what happened and answer any questions the panel may have, or to put forward the reasons for disputing the penalty. The panel may decide that there was no breach or confirm a breach has taken place and decide on one or more of the penalties available to them.

If you want to find out more on how the meeting will be run, the University's interactive resource here may be helpful:

http://edshare.soton.ac.uk/19361/2/story_html5.html

What outcomes can I expect from an Academic Integrity meeting?

If the Academic Integrity Officer or Academic Integrity Panel decide that you have breached the regulations, they can apply a penalty from a list of penalties under the Academic Integrity regulations. Penalties can vary from a written warning on your student file, to withdrawing an award if the breach was confirmed after you graduated. For a list of all penalties, see the [Academic Integrity regulations](#) Point 5 under Section A. You will normally be informed of the outcome within 5 working days of the meeting.

What can I do if I do not agree with the penalty?

If the decision was made by the Academic Integrity Officer, you can request for your case to be reviewed by an Academic Integrity Panel. You have to make that request within 5 working days of the decision. You will be invited to appear before the Panel to outline your case.

If the decision was made by the Academic Integrity Panel, you may lodge an Academic Appeal, but only if you have grounds and evidence (see our Appeals guide or the [Academic Appeals regulations](#)).



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Further guidance

For further guidance on the Academic Integrity regulations contact the Advice Centre.

- 02380 592 085
- advice@susu.org

You can also visit us in Building 40, Highfield campus. Our opening hours are Monday–Friday 09.00–17.00.

Disclaimer: While care has been taken to ensure that information contained in the Advice Centre publications is true and correct at the time of writing, changes in circumstances after the time of publication may impact on the accuracy of this information. The Advice Centre and SUSU cannot accept responsibility for any actions taken as a result of advice given in this publication.
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