



ECU STUDENT GUILD GUIDE TO

ACADEMIC BREACHES /ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

**HAVE YOU RECEIVED
A NOTIFICATION
OF AN ACADEMIC
BREACH OR
ACADEMIC
MISCONDUCT?**

WHAT IS AN ACADEMIC BREACH?

(NEW TO ECU STUDENTS ONLY)

An Academic Breach is any act of minor and unintentional Plagiarism committed by a 'New to ECU Student'. You are a 'New to ECU student' if you have been enrolled for two or fewer teaching periods, have not previously committed an act of misconduct, or are not a PhD, Masters (Research) or Honours Student.

WHAT IS ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT?

Academic Misconduct is any conduct by a student in relation to academic work that is dishonest or unfair, and includes an Academic Breach. This includes one or more of the following:

Bribery or Coercion; Cheating in Examinations; Contract Cheating; Fabrication or Falsification; Failure to meet required research standards; Plagiarism; Unauthorised Collaboration.

ALLEGATIONS AND THE INVESTIGATION

WHAT HAPPENS NOW?

If an ECU staff member has reasonable grounds to believe that Academic Misconduct has occurred, the following process will take place.

- 1) The staff member will report their concerns to the Unit Coordinator for an initial review. If there is insufficient evidence then the staff member's concerns will be dismissed.
- 2) If the staff member's concerns are not dismissed then the Student Academic Integrity Coordinator will appoint a Designated Officer to investigate the matter further. This could be your Unit Coordinator (if an Academic Breach) or the School Associate Dean, Teaching and Learning or a Panel, depending on the severity of the academic misconduct.
- 3) The Designated Officer will consider the evidence presented and **contact you to via your ECU Student email to arrange an interview.** This must take place within 28 days of alleged Academic Misconduct being reported. During the investigation:
 - a) The Designated Officer will take into consideration your preference for the interview, either phone, teleconference, videoconference or in person. You can also submit additional information during the investigation. If you do not attend the interview, the Designated Officer will review the evidence and make a decision on the investigation without you. **It is strongly recommended that you attend the interview.**
 - b) The Designated Officer will provide you with copies of any documentation or evidence forming part of the investigation. This will be provided when inviting you to attend an interview used in the determination.
 - c) **A support person can accompany you to the interview!** This can be a Student Guild representative, friend, or family member, as long as you do not have legal representation. **Another ECU staff member may attend the interview, but may only be an observer or take notes.**

At any time during an investigation a Designated Officer may refer an allegation for allocation to one or more other Designated Officers. This might include where there is a conflict of interest or where, as a result of preliminary investigations, the allegation appears more or less serious than when first classified.

HOW CAN THE GUILD HELP ME?

The Guild's GSAs can provide advice and advocacy to support you with the academic misconduct process. You can book in with a GSA for an appointment or email studentassist@ecuguild.org.au with any questions. Examples of how GSAs can assist include:

- Advice on ECU's various rules and requirements that relate to Academic Misconduct and breaches.
- Attending as a support person at an Academic Misconduct interview or Student Appeals Committee Hearing.
- Advice on whether you should consider applying for the Student Appeals Committee process according to your individual circumstances.
- Providing a template letter and assistance with drafting a supporting statement for an appeal.
- Advocating on your behalf in instances where ECU staff are not following the Academic Misconduct process.
- Advice on other options that are appropriate to your situation, such as a request for Special Consideration/ Resubmission of work, Extension, Complaint, Withdrawal Without Penalty application, Academic Progression Status Formal Review or support at a meeting with School staff not related to the academic misconduct process.

If you have any questions about the process, are or unsure whether it is worth going ahead with an appeal, then always worth consulting with a GSA first. GSAs will provide you with confidential, honest, informed advice and support you as much as possible when there is a genuine reason to do so.



WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THE INVESTIGATION?

Once the investigation is complete you will be notified via your ECU student e-mail within 7 days of the outcome. This may be an e-mail to advise you that the case has been dismissed.

For a details of the possible outcomes depending on the severity of the academic misconduct, refer to the Academic Misconduct Procedures document. You can access this here: <https://intranet.ecu.edu.au/student/my-studies/academic-integrity>

APPEAL TO THE STUDENT APPEAL COMMITTEE

If you are dissatisfied with the penalty imposed following an academic misconduct investigation you may have grounds to appeal to the Student Appeals Committee (SAC). Your GSA can provide you with more information about this process.

It is important to note, you must submit your SAC application within **14 calendar days** of receiving the outcome of the academic misconduct investigation.



WHAT DO I DO IF MY APPEAL IS UNSUCCESSFUL?

The Student Appeals Committee is the final avenue for appeal in the university. If you simply don't like the outcome, going to the Dean or other ECU staff will not change it. The Guild also discourages any behaviour that breaches the Student Code of Conduct.

If you have exhausted all avenues of appeal within the University and are unhappy with the way the appeal was handled, or the outcome – you can lodge a complaint with the WA State Ombudsman. The WA State Ombudsman is independent and external to the University and does not charge any fees for their services.

The WA State Ombudsman will normally only consider whether the University has followed its own policies and procedures correctly when handling your initial appeal and whether your appeal has been handled in a fair and reasonable way. It cannot make a new decision, but can make a recommendation to ECU to review the SAC decision, change an administrative practice, or make an apology.

Any action a student takes after receiving advice from a GSA is the responsibility of the student.

