

Exam Irregularities

What is an Exam Irregularity?

An examination irregularity occurs when you;

- Seek to improve your performance by accessing, or attempting to access, material not listed on the front of the paper
- Fail to follow the instructions about the conduct of the exam, via the front page of the paper or the invigilator
- Create a disturbance during the exam.

The First Steps

If during an exam you are suspected of cheating, the invigilator will submit a written report to the Student Conduct team within 24 hours. This report will detail the allegations, and may include any relevant evidence from the examination. The Student Conduct team will then investigate the matter.

How to avoid exam irregularities

The first port of call if you need support is to contact the **University's study support facilities and staff**. If you are feeling under pressure or are struggling to cope with the pressures of the examination periods then the **Counselling & Wellbeing Service** offers a wide range of workshops in the run-up to examination period, and also has professional counsellors who can provide support and guidance through these difficult periods. See 'Sources of Help'.

The Initial Process

Following the Invigilator's Report, **you will receive written notification of the allegations against you within 10 working days**, and invited to an interview with a Student Conduct Officer. You are entitled to take a 'friend' with you...this should be a member of University Staff, another registered Student or an elected **Guild Officer**.

The interview will take the following format:

The Investigating Officer should introduce themselves and any other persons present. You will be informed of the procedures that will be followed and will have the opportunity to ask questions about the process. The Investigating Officer will then inform you of the allegation(s) which have been made against you, reading out any reports and/or statements that have been submitted.

After being informed of the allegations, you will be given the opportunity to respond to the allegation. The Investigating Officer may ask questions to help ascertain the facts of the case and will also make notes of the interview. At the conclusion of the interview the Investigating Officer will inform you of the continued procedure.

What happens next?

If the Investigating Officer decides that there is a case to answer, and you admit to the offence (paying compensation where relevant), the Investigating Officer may deal with the case summarily. They can either;

- Reprimand you
- Impose a penalty/fine
- Determine that you should undertake community service, specifying the details of the service before you accept this outcome, or
- Accept an undertaking from the student as to his or her behaviour or to engage with appropriate student support and/or remedial tuition.

If you **deny the allegation** or **do not wish for the matter to be dealt with summarily**, or if the Investigating Officer deems that the offence is of **a more serious nature than a summary offence**, they will then write to the Head of College stating this, and a College Misconduct Committee or a Fitness to Practice Committee will be convened. Where the offence is not dealt with summarily, then it will be dealt with as a non-summary.

Sources of Help

Guild Advice

If you have been accused of Exam Irregularities we can help you prepare your case and source Guild Officer Representation for University meetings.

www.guildofstudents.com/guildadvice

Student Conduct

Code of Practice on Conduct of Centrally Co-ordinated Formal Written Examinations

<https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/as/registry/legislation/documents/public/Cohort-Legislation-2016-17/CoP-Conduct-Centrally-Coordinated-Examinations-16-17.pdf>

Guidelines on Examination Irregularity Investigations

<https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/as/registry/policy/conduct/documents/public/guidelinesonexamirregularities.pdf>

University Counselling and Wellbeing

<https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/study/birmingham/campus/student-support.aspx>

Chaplaincy

You can speak to the Chaplains regardless of your faith.

Located next to the Guild of Students

<http://www.chaplaincy.bham.ac.uk/index.shtml>

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If during an exam you are suspected of cheating, the invigilator will submit a written report to the Student Conduct Team within 24 hours.



Student Conduct Team
will investigate the matter.



Student will receive written notification of the allegations made against them within 10 working days and will be invited to an interview with a Student Conduct Officer. You are entitled to take a 'friend' with you- this should be a university member of staff, another registered student or an elected Guild Officer. You are expected to engage with the investigation.



Interview takes place. A copy of the notes
will normally be provided to you at the end
of the interview.



If the Investigation Officer (IO) decides that there is a case to answer, and you admit to the offence the Investigating Officer may deal with the case summarily.



If you deny the allegation or do not wish for the matter to be dealt with summarily, or the Investigating Officer deems that the offence is more of a serious nature than the summary offence, they will then write to Head of College stating this. A College Misconduct Committee or Fitness to Practice Committee will be convened.

If you accept a summary sanction, this will be confirmed in writing and the case will be closed immediately unless there are outstanding actions to be completed.

You will be asked for your response to the report and can provide any further evidence or information you wish for the Committee to consider.



The CMC will normally hear the case within 6-8 weeks after the IO has decided to refer the case to the CMC.



The full bundle of papers which will be considered by the Committee will be sent to the student at least ten working days before the Committee hearing.



If a student's case is referred to CMC their marks will not be formally processed and released to them online. The student's school will be informed of the position and will be advised that their results may be communicated to them informally by email on or after the date for the release of marks.



Student may wish to prepare for resit (supplementary exams), including for the exam in which the alleged examination irregularity occurred.



Attempts will be made to schedule the CMC to take place for the Supplementary Exam Period. If in the unlikely event the CMC does not take place before the Supplementary Exam Period and the student has failed the exam in the affected module, they would provisionally be allowed to take the re-sit exam.



If the case against a student is found proven on the balance of probabilities, the CMC may apply a sanction where the student is not permitted to a resit. This would mean that although the student has taken the resit exam before the CMC, the attempt would be void and would not be marked.