



ADVICE CENTRE

FREE INDEPENDENT AND IMPARTIAL ADVICE



Hull University Union Advice Centre

Academic Issues

How we can help



HULL UNIVERSITY
UNION

Contents

Introducing the Advice Centre	03
Problems with your Course	04
Suspension of Studies	07
Guidance on Mitigating Circumstances	09
Plagiarism	11
Academic Misconduct	12
Academic/Academic Misconduct Appeals	15

All information in this booklet is correct as of December 4th 2017 and is subject to change.
For the most recent version please visit www.hullstudent.com/advice

This booklet does not apply to all programmes of study and should be read in conjunction with the University Regulations for your programme of study.

Introducing the **Advice Centre**

The Advice Centre provides a free, confidential and impartial and non-judgemental service for all students at the University of Hull. We are independent of the University and can help you with any issues you face whilst a student here.

Like a Citizens Advice Bureau or a Law Centre, we give practical advice on all kinds of subjects relating to student life.

Whether it's debt and funding issues, academic problems, housing and tenancy queries or consumer and employment issues, we will have a member of staff that can help. We also have a free phone so you can call Student Finance England without having to worry about the cost of the call.

We are an Advice UK member and subscribe to Citizens Advice and Advisernet. Both organisations provide us with updated information that enables us to give current and accurate information at all times.

Visit us in the Advice Centre at the University of Hull Students' Union at the Student Central building Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri - 9.30am-3pm and Weds 12-3pm. If you can't make these times please email the team on hull-advice-centre@hull.ac.uk or call them on 01482 466263 to arrange a more convenient time for you.

**The Advice Centre website address is
<http://hullstudent.com/advice>**



Problems With Your Course?

If you are experiencing difficulties with your course you have a number of options:

- **Your first point of contact is your Academic Support Tutor.**

This will be an academic member of staff from your School. Every student should have one, so if you don't, ask for one. Your Academic Support Tutor (AST) is there to be informed of any problem you are experiencing, give you advice and guidance in your academic process and to point you in the direction of further help, support and advice. Each Faculty is also assigned a 'Senior Tutor'. This is someone from another Faculty who you can approach for independent support if you cannot resolve a matter internally.

- **Students are often unhappy and homesick, especially at the start of their course.**

It is important to remember that you are not the only one and there are services to help. There is a Student Wellbeing, Learning and Welfare Support Service to help you through this, and the Advice Centre has details of organisations that can help with specific problems.

- **Study skills can often be a problem, especially if you have not come to University straight from school or college.**

The University Skills Team offers support to students on a wide range of areas. Just some of the things they can help with include the transition from school to University, gathering information, presentation of essays, basic grammar, revision, exam stress, maths and IT skills.

- **If a specific learning disability (SPLD) is affecting your study (or any other aspect of University life), then please contact the Student Wellbeing, Learning and Welfare Support Service who can provide support, advice and assistance.**
- **There are different forms and processes for extensions and mitigating circumstance claims.**

These are available from your School or the Advice Centre. You need to complete them when requesting extensions, applying for Mitigating Circumstances or absence from any assessment. We can assist you with the forms and advise you about your options.

- **If you fail your course or do not feel you can continue with it.**

We can advise you regarding options that may be available, such as re-sits, repeating part of it, doing another course or suspending your studies (taking some time out during your course).

- **The options above are at your School's and the University's discretion; it helps to be able to show good reasons why you have failed.**

Talk to your Academic Support Tutor and find out your options. Repeating study may effect your funding, so it is important that you seek advice from the Advice Centre and Student Finance England.



- **If you want to transfer to another course, again talk to your Academic Support Tutor.**

You will need permission from your own School and the one you are transferring to. Again, your funding may be affected. You will need a 'Change of Programme of Study' form completing.

- **If you are an International student and are considering a course of action that would extend your stay in this country, for example Suspension of Study or repeat study, then you should seek advice from an Immigration Adviser as this could have serious implications for your immigration status.**
- **If you are unhappy at the start of your course, you can defer your place until next year, with the University's permission.**

This will mean that you will not be classed as a student until you take up your place. Before making this decision please contact Student Finance England to establish how this will affect your future funding.

- **If you want to take a 'Suspension of Study', you require your School's approval.**

You will need to read the Suspension of Study Code of Practice found on the University of Hull SharePoint website and complete the Suspension of Study form.

- **If you are unhappy with any aspect of your life at University then please try and resolve this informally in the first instance with your school. If this is not resolved you can make a formal complaint using the complaints form available on the University of Hull website within the three month deadline.**

If you are not happy with the support of your Academic Support Tutor then you can change to another.

Suspension of Studies

Definition and Process

- 1. Suspension of Study is suspending or taking a break from your studies.**

Students may request a period of Suspension of Study at any time during their studies, for any reason. Suspension of Studies may be planned, in the case of time off to travel or work, or be in response to illness or personal problems which are affecting the student's ability to study effectively.

- 2. Students should discuss their wish to suspend their studies with their Programme Director (or equivalent) in advance of making a formal request.**

Academic Support Tutors should also be informed at an early stage. Students on 'Joint' or 'With' programmes must discuss the proposed Suspension of Studies with the Programme Director (or equivalent) to ensure that both Schools are aware of all issues.

- 3. Students thinking of suspending their studies should always read the Suspension of Study Code of Practice found on the University of Hull SharePoint website.**

- 4. Students must apply in writing, using the appropriate suspension form available on SharePoint and attach evidence of the reasons for the request.**

The student then hands this completed documentation to their home academic School. Once approved by the School, the form is then forwarded to Registry Services.



5. Initial Suspensions of Study which are for a period of up to 12 months need the approval of the Head of School.

6. International students wishing to suspend their studies must see the University Immigration Adviser before submitting their suspension form to the School.

The Immigration Adviser will sign the form to indicate that the student has been given the appropriate advice as this may have visa and immigration implications.

7. Extensions of periods of Suspension of Studies, requests for suspension of studies of more than 12 months, retrospective suspension of studies and any requests which are otherwise 'unusual' must have the approval of the school and the Faculty before going to the Student Progress Committee for approval.

Students requesting extensions of Suspensions of Studies will be expected to provide evidence of the ongoing problems affecting their return to study. There is a limit on how long you can suspend studies for as you have to complete each level of a course in 3 years.

8. Students must inform Student Finance England as this may affect student funding.

Guidance on Mitigating Circumstances

Extension requests

- Must be submitted within 24 hours of the submission deadline using the Coursework extension form.
- Must be supported by appropriate documentary evidence.
- Must be submitted to your faculty student hub.
- May be given for up to 10 working days (for some assessments this may be limited to 5 days due to the assessment and feedback criteria).

If you are unable to submit the coursework prior to the extended deadline you must submit a mitigating circumstances form within the 10-day deadline.

Mitigating Circumstances

- Must be submitted no later than 10 working days after the examination or submission deadline using the Mitigating Circumstances form.
- Any claims submitted after 10 working days will not be considered.
- Can be submitted whether the work is handed in or not.
- If work is submitted and Mitigating Circumstances are approved, any previous submission will be disregarded and a new attempt will need to be completed.
- Mitigating Circumstances Committees will have decision making powers so students will be notified after the Committee meeting has taken place.
- All claims must be supported by appropriate documentary evidence.

If you are ill during an actual exam, the Chief Invigilator will notify the Head of Registry Services and you have 10 working days to request that these circumstances be forwarded to your School for them to consider whether you are permitted a new first attempt at a later date.



Medical Evidence

The GP medical evidence form can be completed by your GP. The GP evidence can follow, but this needs to be made clear on the Mitigating Circumstances form with your GP appointment date clearly stated and that evidence will follow.

Self-Certification

Students who miss an exam or timed assessment may use self-certification for short term illness (1-5 days) to cover their absence as supporting documentary evidence for mitigating circumstances. This can only be used for a maximum of two absences in a particular trimester and a maximum of three absences in an academic year.

Exceptional Circumstances

This is specifically for students with long-term difficulties which may re-occur which have not already been supported. Examples of these may be, but not limited to abuse or physical assault, deterioration in mental health (not already supported), deterioration in physical health, caring responsibilities which may affect attendance. Students in these situations will be identified through an initial mitigating circumstances request and will still need to submit extension requests or mitigating circumstances claims but will only be required to provide documentary evidence once.

Forms:

Mitigating circumstances form.

Coursework extension request form.

Medical evidence form.

Self-Certification form.



Plagiarism:

What is plagiarism?

Plagiarism is work which purports to be a candidate's own but which is taken without acknowledgement from the published or unpublished work of others.



Using incorrect referencing could result in an accusation of plagiarism.

Your School handbook contains information on how you should reference. You can also get further information or help with referencing from the Skills Team at the Library.

Determining Penalties

When deciding on the penalty, the Panel take into account the following:

- The nature and severity of the conduct found to constitute Academic Misconduct.
- In the case of plagiarism or collusion, the extent of the offence relative to the total assessment requirement of the module.
- The number of breaches found proven by the Panel.
- The stage of programme the candidate had reached at the time the breach was committed.
- Statements of mitigation or explanation and supporting documented evidence. Subject to where an allegation of plagiarism has been proven, any claim of mitigating circumstances must be disregarded unless in the view of the Panel the circumstances are very exceptional. Where the Panel considers that they are very exceptional, the Panel hearing must be suspended pending a ruling from the Chair of Student Progress Committee or Research Degree Committee as to whether the circumstances are sufficiently exceptional as to justify taking them into account.

Academic Misconduct

What is Academic Misconduct?

'Academic Misconduct' describes any kind of academic misconduct, for example, plagiarism, cheating in an exam, conspiring with another person to produce work, or falsifying results for coursework – all of which the University regards as unacceptable according to the Regulations governing Academic Misconduct.

The Regulations governing Academic Misconduct is available from the Advice Centre or through the Portal / University of Hull website.

What to do if an allegation is made against you.

If the University believes that you have breached the Regulations governing Academic Misconduct, you may receive a letter from the University specifying the allegation of Academic Misconduct.

You have 15 working days to respond to this letter. It is in your best interest to respond, as it gives you the opportunity to explain your case. The Advice Centre can read over your response statement for you and offer further advice.

Your Response letter

Your response letter gives you the opportunity to explain why you believe you admit or deny the allegation. You need to explain fully the circumstances of your allegation. All the information you submit will be treated confidentially. Please provide evidence if appropriate to support your case.

What Happens Next?

After you have submitted your response letter an Academic Misconduct Officer will decide whether a penalty is imposed without an Adjudicating Panel - please refer to the Academic Misconduct Regulations. If an Adjudicating Panel is arranged, the Adjudicating Panel will be made up of the Chair and at least 1 other person appointed from the pool of Academic Misconduct Officers drawn from a different Faculty to the student. The Adjudicating Panel will look at the facts of your case and determine the penalty within 3 working days of the meeting.



The range of penalties is set out below for taught programmes

A University Warning is issued for all proven breaches.

Penalty	Who can impose the penalty
University warning usually with requirement to resubmit work	Academic Misconduct Officer or Adjudication Panel
University warning and a Mark of 0 for the component	Academic Misconduct Officer or Adjudication Panel
University warning and a Mark of 0 for module with reassessment right but mark capped at bare pass	Academic Misconduct Officer or Adjudication Panel
University warning and a Mark of 0 for module without reassessment right	Adjudication Panel
University warning and Suspension for a year	Chair of SPC following recommendation from the Adjudication Panel
University warning and Reduction of the classification of the award by one class	Chair of SPC following recommendation from the Adjudication Panel
Termination of study	Chair of SPC following recommendation from the Adjudication Panel

Second Breaches:

(Not including simultaneous second breaches)

The Adjudicating Panel assumes a termination of programme.

Academic/Academic Misconduct Appeals

If you wish to appeal against a recommendation of a Module or Programme Board of Examiners or a School or Faculty, you must complete an academic appeal form to the Secretary of Student Progress Committee at Registry Services within 10 working days of receiving official notice of the recommendation that you are appealing against. Academic appeals are governed by the University's Academic Appeals and Queries Regulations. The Academic Misconduct appeals are governed by the Regulations governing Academic Misconduct.

Grounds for appeal:

(a) That there existed circumstances affecting the candidate's performance of which the examiners had not been aware when the recommendation or decision was made, and that had the examiners been aware of those circumstances it was reasonably likely that the examiners would not have made the recommendation or would have made a different recommendation or decision.

An appeal lodged on ground (a) above, shall, other than in very exceptional circumstances, be rejected for lack of grounds where the evidence adduced in support of the appeal was available to the candidate prior to the making of the recommendation or decision by the examiners, and without good reason was not disclosed by the candidate to the examiners.

(b) That there were procedural irregularities in the conduct of the assessment process (including administrative error), of such a nature as to cause reasonable doubt as to whether the examiners would have reached the same conclusion had the irregularities not occurred.

(c) That there are reasonable grounds to believe that the recommendation or decision was influenced by prejudice or bias on the part of one or more of the examiners.

Students are advised to keep a copy of all the paperwork submitted. The Senior Tutor investigates the case and will contact you before they make a decision. Therefore please try and make sure that you have included all the relevant information with the appeal. All Senior Tutor's are members of the Student Progress Committee and from a separate school to your own.

The Academic Appeals and Queries Regulations and the Regulations governing the Use of Academic Misconduct are both online and available at the Advice Centre.

All the University forms/regulations can be found on the Registry Services/ University of Hull SharePoint website with referral to the Student Handbook and Quality and Standards Framework.

If your appeal is rejected, then you may make a complaint to the Office of Independent Adjudicator. To do this you must have exhausted the internal appeals process at the University and received a completion of Procedures letter.

Information can be found on the OIA website:

<http://www.oiahe.org.uk/>