

ACADEMIC CONDUCT AND PRACTICE HANDBOOK

Appendix C - Policy in Relation to Investigations and Hearings Involving Group Work

1. Where a marker suspects academic misconduct in a piece of group work, they should refer the piece of work, with the names of all those within the group to the Academic Conduct Officer.
2. The Academic Conduct Officer should conduct the normal enquires into the piece of work to determine if an offence has occurred. If they confirm an offence has occurred, then they should refer the case to the Senior Academic Conduct Officer and the standard process should be followed for each of the Students involved.
3. If, in considering the case, the Senior Academic Conduct Officer determines that there is evidence of an academic offence, then they should proceed with the process as detailed in Chapter 4 of the Handbook.
4. When hearing cases involving group work, those investigating the offence should meet each individual of the group in sequence. No decisions should be made until the Academic Conduct Officer, or Panel, has offered the chance to all students involved in the alleged offence to attend a meeting. All group members must have the opportunity to be interviewed individually by the Academic Conduct Officer or Panel, to allow them the opportunity to provide their explanation without influence of other group members.
5. Once all students involved in the alleged offence have been offered an interview, the Panel should then convene in private to consider whether a) the allegation is proven and b) it is necessary to apply any penalties. This may vary between the different members of the group, depending on the evidence presented to the Academic Conduct Officer or Panel, and they should be mindful of the group dynamics and should use their best judgement to ensure that all members of the group are treated equitably. The testimony of all group members will be taken into consideration by the Academic Conduct Officer or Panel when making a judgement on the case.
6. When considering each case, the Academic Conduct Officer or Panel should exercise their judgement and reach an outcome based on the balance of probabilities, noting that they may reach a different judgement for each student concerned. The Panel can either impose

a penalty on a specific individual as the sole party at fault or may determine that the group as a whole is at fault, and impose a collective penalty on the group; this may be more suitable if the group work was designed to produce a single piece of work with a mark in common for all members of the group.