

A STUDENT'S GUIDE TO

# DISCIPLINARY OFFENCES

## GET IN TOUCH

**0121 204 4848**

[advice@aston.ac.uk](mailto:advice@aston.ac.uk)

10:00am - 4:00pm

### DROP IN

10:30am - 12:30pm weekdays

No appointment needed at this time

### LOCATION

Ground floor of Students' Union building



# DISCIPLINARY OFFENCES



A disciplinary offence occurs when a student breaches the University's Student Code of Conduct, with unacceptable behaviour that undermines Aston University and the wider community.

## STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

The University expects all students to uphold acceptable standards of behaviour within the University community. Any behaviour falling below these standards and breaching the Student Code of Conduct may lead to an investigation and disciplinary action.

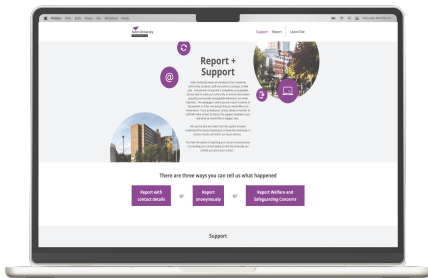
## EXAMPLES OF UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR

- Violent, offensive, or inappropriate behaviour.
- Attempts to gain unfair advantage in assessments (e.g. plagiarism).
- Disruption of University activities.
- Harassment, assault, or damage to University property.
- Fraud, including identity and student finance fraud.
- Misuse of University intellectual property.
- Behaviour bringing the University into disrepute.
- Convicted of an offence or accepts a police caution.

## MAKING A COMPLAINT ABOUT ANOTHER STUDENT

### Steps to take:

- Seek advice from your Personal Tutor or the Students' Union Advice team.
- If proceeding formally, submit a report via the Aston University's [Report and Support](#) web page.



## RESPONDING TO COMPLAINTS OR CHARGES ABOUT YOU

Think carefully before responding to charges.

- First seek advice from the Students' Union.
- Request detailed information about the allegations.
- Review the evidence and evaluate your options.

## ATTENDING MEETINGS AND HEARINGS

A Disciplinary Officer might invite you to a meeting to discuss the allegations. Attend any scheduled meetings. If precautionary exclusion is imposed, follow University instructions and seek advice from the Students' Union.

## IF ACCEPTING THE CHARGES

Acknowledge the allegations, express any regrets, and provide a clear and honest account, accepting responsibility. Reflect on the incident, and outline steps taken to prevent recurrence. You should also mention any relevant mitigating circumstances that may have affected your behaviour.

## IF DENYING THE CHARGES

Clearly state your denial supporting reasons. Present evidence or witnesses that support your position, highlighting and discrepancies. Offer a detailed timeline of events, emphasising any misunderstandings or external factors. Express willingness to cooperate with further investigations while maintaining your innocence.

## AUTHORISED OFFICER

On receiving your response, the Disciplinary Officer may refer it to an Authorised Officer (AO) instead of a disciplinary Board.

Authorised Officers are authorised to deal in the first instance with offences and issue penalties. A meeting might be arranged to consider mitigating circumstances before deciding a penalty.

## POTENTIAL PENALTIES

The severity of the penalty will depend on how bad the offence was, whether you meant to do it, if you've done it before, how it affected others, and where it happened (on or off campus). Serious offences are referred to the Disciplinary Board to determine the outcome and penalty.

## WE CAN HELP...

Please visit: [astonsu.com/support](https://astonsu.com/support)

EXPLAIN THE DISCIPLINARY PROCESS. PROVIDE GUIDANCE ON WHAT TO EXPECT. PROVIDE SUPPORT AND REPRESENTATION IN MEETINGS AND HEARINGS. HELP YOU DETERMINE YOUR NEXT STEPS. AND MORE.

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## UNIVERSITY DISCIPLINARY BOARD HEARING PROCESS

### Pre-Hearing Preparation

- **Hearing Invitation:**  
Students receive a written notice at least 15 days before the hearing, detailing the charge, rights to representation, and hearing details (usually sent by email to the student's university email address).
- **Response:**  
Students should respond in writing at least 10 days before the hearing. They can choose to admit, deny, or challenge the charge. They can also ask to be supported by a friend and/or represented by someone.
- **Documentation:**  
Relevant documents, and any evidence including that submitted by the student, are provided to the student at least 5 days before the hearing.

## DURING THE HEARING

### Composition of the Board:

The Disciplinary Board typically comprises a Chair, and academic representative, and a student representative from the Students' Union.

### If you Accept the Charge

- a) Presentation of Case:** The hearing begins with introductions and confirmation you accept the charge.
- b) Mitigating Factors:** You can then present any mitigating circumstances before the penalty is determined.

### If you Deny the Charge

- a) Presentation of Case:** The hearing begins with introductions and confirmation you deny the charge. A University Presenter presents the case against you.
- b) Your Defence:** You have the opportunity to present your defence and respond to the allegations. Both parties can be questioned after presenting their cases.
- c) Closing Statements:** Both you and the University Presenter may make closing statements before the Board make their decision.

## DECISION AND PENALTY DETERMINATION

### Potential Outcomes

- **Charge denied and unproven:** If you deny the charge and the Board finds the charge unproven, the case will be dismissed and no penalty given.
- **Charge admitted or proven:** If you admit the charge or the Board find the charge is proven, you have the opportunity to present any mitigating circumstances before the penalty is determined.
- **Consideration of factors:** The Board considers the severity and other relevant factors.
- **Range of Penalties:** Penalties range from warnings to expulsion, depending on the offense's severity and other relevant factors.

## OUTCOME NOTIFICATION

- **Immediate Notification:** You may be informed of the outcome on the day of the hearing.
- **Written Notification:** Alternatively, the outcome may be communicated in writing, usually within five working days.

## RIGHT TO APPEAL

- You have the right to appeal against a decision or penalty imposed on you within 10 days of receiving the notification. If you don't appeal within this timeframe, the penalty will stand.
- If you admitted the charge during the proceedings, you can only appeal the penalty imposed, not the finding of guilt.

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