Discipline Regulations
Student Guide

As a student at the University of Law, you are expected and agree to adhere to regulations about your behaviour. If it is felt that your behaviour has contravened this agreement, and an allegation against you is made, then the University can instigate the Disciplinary Regulations and Policy to determine whether this allegation is founded or unfounded. This guide is designed to give you a brief overview of the University’s student disciplinary procedure and some tips for responding to a disciplinary allegation. As this is only a guide, it is important that you also read the Student Disciplinary Regulations and the Student Discipline Policy.

What allegations can be made against me?
Under the discipline regulations, there are four main areas which may give grounds to bring an allegation against you:

- Ordinary disciplinary offences
- Assessment Related offences
- Participation Related offences, and
- Gross Misconduct

Examples of what each of this may involve can be found under Regulation 6 of the Student Disciplinary Regulations.

What is the first stage in the disciplinary process?
Firstly, resolution of an allegation will be attempted informally. This may include discussing any issues with you. This may not happen in all circumstances, as some disciplinary issues may not be resolved in this way.

How does an allegation become formal?
If the resolution is unable to be completed informally, your Campus Dean shall appoint a senior member of staff (who has no connection to the allegation) to investigate the allegation and report the outcome of the investigation to them.

When do I get informed?
When the Campus Dean appoints a staff member to investigate the allegation, you are informed of the allegation against you: who the Investigating Officer is, the nature of the investigation and the relevant regulations. In some cases, you will not be notified until after the investigation has been concluded (this happens where your knowledge of the investigation may prejudice the outcome).

**Does the Investigating Officer always hold a meeting with me?**

Not always. Once the Investigating Officer reports back to the Campus Dean, they can exclude you from or restrict your access to their centre.

If the Investigating Officer requires a meeting, they shall inform you of the relevant details so you can attend in person.

**Can I be represented at the Investigating Officer’s meeting?**

You are able to bring a friend or family member for support. However, they are not able to make representations on your behalf and, likewise, you are unable to bring any legal representation.

**Is this the disciplinary hearing?**

No. This meeting with the Investigating Officer may be to clarify any details which have not become apparent through their investigation. They may also want to obtain your side of the situation to present in their report to your Campus Dean.

**What happens with the Investigating Officer’s report?**

This is sent to your Campus Dean who can decide to do one of several things: take no further action, instigate a disciplinary hearing or deal with the matter informally and via the available support services.

If you have been informed that the investigation has taken place, the Campus Dean will let you know the outcome. If you have not been informed, and the Campus
Dean decides to take no further action, they are not obligated to tell you the investigation has taken place.

What happens if a disciplinary hearing is necessary?

If your Campus Dean determines that a hearing is necessary, your Campus Dean may exclude you from all or part of their centre under Regulation 4.

The Head of Student Discipline shall appoint a senior member of staff (who has no previous connection to the allegation) as the Hearing Officer.

What is the process for a disciplinary hearing?

You will be informed no later than seven days before the hearing of all of the hearing details, see Regulation 5.2. This includes the right to be represented in the same way as at the Investigating Officer’s meeting.

The Hearing Officer will open the meeting, which shall be audio recorded, by introducing themselves and the note taker present and explaining the allegations against you. They will explain the relevant terms of the regulations and what this means for you. You will then have an opportunity to present your side of your case, ask the Investigating Officer any questions you have about their report, and present any evidence that you have provided. The Hearing Officer is able to question you throughout; this is to ensure that any matters are clarified and they have all the evidence they need to make their decision.

When will the Hearing Officer make their decision, and when will I be informed?

The Hearing Officer determines firstly whether the allegations made against you are founded and, if so, what penalties they are able to impose. This decision must be made, approved by the Head of Student Discipline and your Campus Dean, and you will be informed of the outcome within 14 calendar days of the hearing.

What happens if I fail to attend the disciplinary hearing?
The Hearing Officer may proceed in your absence and therefore you may not have the opportunity to present your side of your case. However, you are able to submit written evidence at least two working days before your hearing.

What are the penalties that can be imposed if the allegation is upheld?
This depends on the type of allegation made against you. Please see Regulation 7 for further information.

What are the differences between a written and a final written warning?
A written warning may be the penalty imposed on you. A final written warning may be made if you have committed a previous offence under the disciplinary regulations, or if your offence is considered very serious. After this, the next penalty for any further offence is expulsion.

Can I appeal the decision that has been made?
Yes, you are able to appeal the decision within 14 calendar days of being sent notice of the original decision. You must apply in writing to the Academic Registrar, adhering to Regulation 10.2.

How does the appeal work?
The appeal will work in a similar way to the disciplinary hearing, and if you fail to show up, the appeal chair may make a decision in your absence. You are also able to bring a friend along in the same way, but not legal or other representation.

What can I do if I am still not satisfied?
The appeals decision is the final decision within the University. However, if you are still not satisfied with your appeal, you may ask that the decision be reviewed by the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA), and details of how to do this will be provided in the Completion of Procedures Letter that accompanies the final decision by the University.

What is the Completion of Procedures Letter?
This is to inform you that there are no further avenues to pursue your issue at the University and, if you would like to go to the OIA, this letter is required.

**What if I have a question not covered here?**

For further details please contact the Academic Registry at academic.registry@law.ac.uk.

**Guidance for responding to an allegation**

**Evidence**

You need to be clear about the grounds for rebutting the allegation against you and how you intend to evidence your side of events. Evidence may include letters or email correspondence or excerpts from policies or textbooks (please beware of any copyright laws).

A small tip for students is to ensure that you provide a copy for the Hearing Officer. If they go away to make their decision, it would be a lot easier to have a complete picture of the case if they have all of your evidence to hand.

**Content**

When responding to your disciplinary allegation, it is important to remember that it will be investigated by someone who has no prior involvement with the allegation. This is true for both the Investigating and Hearing Officer’s. Therefore, please include plenty of detail such as what happened, when, what was said, who was involved and what evidence you have to support your case. The more specific you are, the more your case shall be put across to the Hearing Officer and the easier it shall be to understand and make a decision.

Please remember, although detail is key, irrelevant details will simply confuse the Investigating and Hearing Officer’s. If you feel your response requires context, put the background details in a separately labelled paragraph or paragraphs.
Remember when completing the review form there are only three possible grounds for review and you must explain why you believe one of these grounds exists. You cannot simply reiterate your original response.

**Structure**

Our advice for this would be to approach things in a logical order; use sub-headings and bullet points if appropriate. It may also be useful for draw yourself a timeline of events so that you can construct your response to any and all allegations accordingly. This shall also assist in you knowing what evidence to present and how you may want to present it.

If you are going to present and submit any written evidence to the Hearing Officer prior to your disciplinary hearing, it may be useful numbering each paragraph, page and item of evidence. This shall make it easier for the Hearing Officer to refer to your written evidence and also to refer back to when attending the hearing in person.

**Style**

We understand that if a disciplinary allegation has been made against you, this can be upsetting, however, when presenting your case and evidence, it is best to try and remain detached. It is best to keep to the facts and present the evidence chronologically.

If you have any further questions about responding to an allegation, please contact the Student Association at Student-Association@law.ac.uk

**Version History**

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