

Guidance Notes for 'Accompanying Persons' at Plagiarism/Collusion Meetings

Introduction

These guidance notes are provided by the University to assist in the application of the Plagiarism and Collusion Policy. They are provided for the benefit of students who wish to be accompanied at a Plagiarism & Collusion meeting by a third party. In order to ensure that the proper conduct of Plagiarism & Collusion meeting is not undermined, it is important that students - and those third parties accompanying them - understand what the accompanying person can and should not do during a plagiarism/collusion meeting. Students should therefore pass these guidance notes to their named accompanying person prior to any formal meeting, and the Plagiarism Officer chairing the meeting will normally check that the accompanying person has read these notes and understands them prior to beginning the meeting. The accompanying person will not be a member of the legal profession, and will not be a member of academic staff of the University.

A brief summary of what happens prior to the meeting

Where a Marker suspects plagiarism or collusion, they allocate a mark that is based solely on the merit of the material being marked. The mark should be returned to the student at the same time as the rest of the cohort. The Marker provides the Plagiarism Officer with an annotated copy of the documentation indicating where there is suspected plagiarism and/or collusion as soon as possible in the marking process. The work will be held on the Hub Reception and the student e-mailed to ask them to collect the work and an accompanying standard letter (P&C Letter 1) advising the student that there is a suspicion of plagiarism. Once the meeting is arranged, the student is sent a second standard letter (P&C Letter 2) inviting them to the School Plagiarism meeting, which will be accompanied by an annotated copy of the work indicating the passages that have raised concern.

The meeting

The meeting shall proceed in the following order:

- the marker who has initially raised the suspicion of plagiarism/collusion presents their concerns but is not part of the outcome decision-making process;
- the Panel shall then provide the student with an opportunity to respond to the concerns of the marker;
- the Panel may ask further questions;
- the Panel shall advise the student that, where plagiarism/collusion is denied, the case shall be referred to a Senate Student Discipline Committee Panel and the student will be able to present their case at that time;
- the marker, student and accompanying person shall then leave the meeting.

What happens after the meeting?

Following the hearing meeting:

- the Panel shall decide on the suitable outcome;
- the student shall be advised of the outcome of the meeting in writing within five working days
- the student can reconsider their plea within five working days of the formal meeting;

- the Head of School shall be advised of the outcome.

The role of the accompanying person during the Plagiarism and Collusion meeting

The student may bring an accompanying person, **who should not take an active part** in the proceedings beyond what is set out below. In all cases, the student themselves shall answer any questions raised in the meeting. The primary role of the 'accompany person' at a plagiarism/collusion meeting is to provide support to the student attending the meeting.

This means they:

- May provide emotional and/or moral support.
- May accompany the student and return with them at the agreed time/place in cases where the Panel believes that the meeting should, for any reason, be temporarily halted.

Support for students with SpLDs and Physical Disabilities

In cases where a student has a specific learning difficulty, a physical disability or mental health condition that may impact on their ability to respond to questions from the Panel at a Plagiarism Meeting, the student may require additional support. The additional support may include an interpreter (British Sign Language), Lip speaker, and/or a sighted guide/reader. Those supporting a student in such circumstances may attend the meeting but will not be deemed to be the accompanying person. The student may bring another person to the meeting as their accompanying person.

Inappropriate behaviour

If the Panel believe the accompanying person is, or appears to be, interfering with the proper conduct of the business of the meeting or behaving in an inappropriate manner, the Panel has the right to:

- i) adjourn the meeting and reconvene it at a later date, and
- ii) exclude the accompanying person from attending the reconvened meeting.

In cases where the accompanying person is excluded from attending a reconvened meeting, the student may bring a different accompanying person to this meeting.

Preparing for the Plagiarism & Collusion Meeting

It is recommended that accompanying persons prepare for the Plagiarism Meeting by familiarising themselves with the University's *Policy on Plagiarism and Collusion* prior to the meeting. Copies of the policy and the guidance available to students in relation to the policy is available at:

<http://www.uea.ac.uk/learningandteaching/documents/discipline>