

The University of Manchester

Senate: 30 June 2010

Annual Report of Student Appeals, Student Complaints and Student Discipline Cases 2008 – 9

Person Reporting

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Synopsis

The University regulations regarding student appeals, complaints and conduct and discipline include the requirement for an annual report on the number and nature of such cases, and on any general issues raised.

The following report covers the academic year 2008 – 9. The figures reported below relate only to formal cases and do not include the significant number of cases which were dealt with informally by Schools.

Previous reports and data are available on the University's Documents website <http://documents.manchester.ac.uk> and can be found quickly by selecting:

Category: 'Student Services'

Type: 'Report'

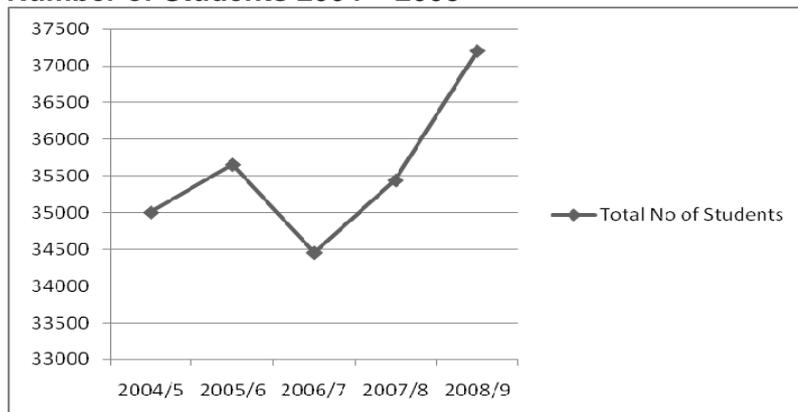
Profile of the Student Population 2008 - 2009

Total Number of Registered Students 1/12/2008

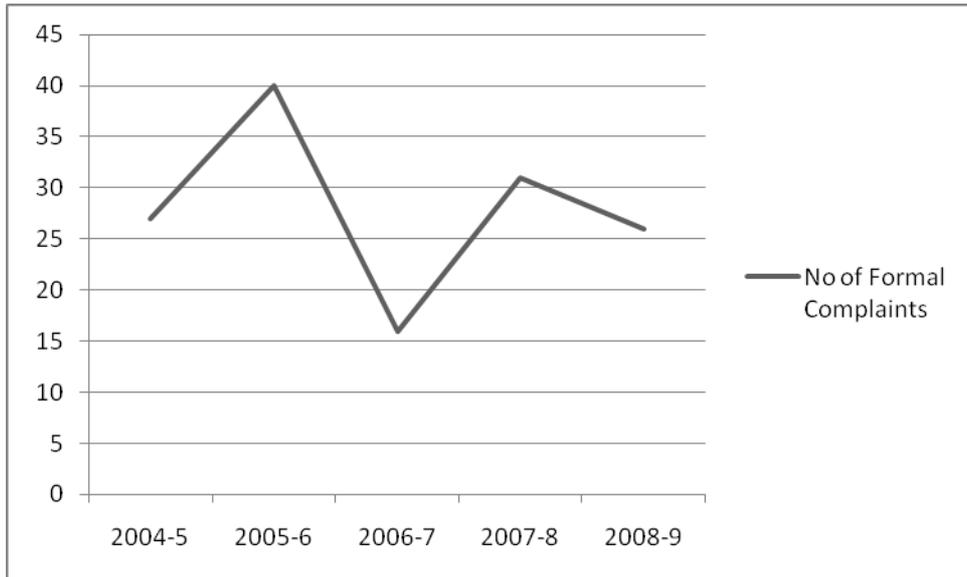
	Total	UG		PGT		PGR		International (inc EU*)		Home students:		Ethnic Minority		Ethnicity Not Known	
			%		%		%		%		%		%		%
Engineering & Physical Sciences	9052	6579	73	1149	13	1324	15	3114	34	4532	50	1164	13	242	3
Life Sciences	2367	1815	77	214	9	338	14	432	18	1449	61	420	18	66	3
Humanities	16394	11899	73	3356	20	1122	7	4438	27	9638	59	1813	11	505	3
Medical & Human Sciences	9208	6901	75	1388	15	719	8	1067	12	5720	62	1779	19	642	7
The University of Manchester	37021	27194	73	6307	17	3520	10	9051	24	21339	58	5176	14	1455	4

* Note: Throughout this report EU students are regarded as international.

Number of Students 2004 – 2008



Student Complaints



Number of Complaints

	Total	PGR	PGT	UG	International	Home students:					
						Ethnic minority	White	Not Known	F	M	Trans
	26	6	8	12	2	6	16	2	14	11	1
%	100	23	31	46	8	23	62	8	54	42	4
% 2007-8	100	23	19	58	16	13	61	10	58	42	23

Faculty	Total	PGR	PGT	UG	International	Home students:					
						Ethnic minority	White	Not Known	F	M	Trans
EPS	4	2	2		1	1	2		1	3	
FLS	1		1				1			1	
Humanities	9	1	4	4	1	1	5	2	4	5	
MHS	12	3	1	8		4	8		9	2	1
Total	26	6	8	12	2	6	16	2	14	11	1

Type of Complaint

	Total	%	% 07-8	PGR	PGT	UG	International	Home students:					
								Ethnic minority	White	Not Known	F	M	Trans
Academic provision/progress	13	50	32		6	7	1	2	8	2	6	7	
Harassment/Discrimination/Bullying	4	15	35	1		3		2	2		2	1	1
Other/Multiple	3		19	1	1	1		2	1		1	2	
Services/Facilities	2	8	6	1					1		1		
Supervision	4	15	6	3	1	1	1		4		4	1	

Outcome of Complaint

	Total	%	% 07-8	PGR	PGT	UG	International	Home students:					
								Ethnic minority	White	Not Known	F	M	Trans
Justified or partly justified	4	15	23		2	2			3	1	2	1	1
Not justified	14	54	55	4	6	4	2	5	7		7	7	
Not eligible for investigation by UoM	1	4				1		1			1		
Ongoing at end of 2008-09	2	8	10	1		1			2		1	1	
Withdrawn by student	2	8	3			2			2		1	1	
Referred to another part of the University	3	12		1		2			2	1	2	1	

The total number of formal complaints received in 2008-9 was 26. In 2007-8 the total number of complaints was 31.

The largest single category of complaints (50%) concerned academic provision and progress.

Over half of the complaints made (including those referred to other parts of the University) were found not to be justified (54%) and were resolved through explanation to the students concerned and apologies where relevant.

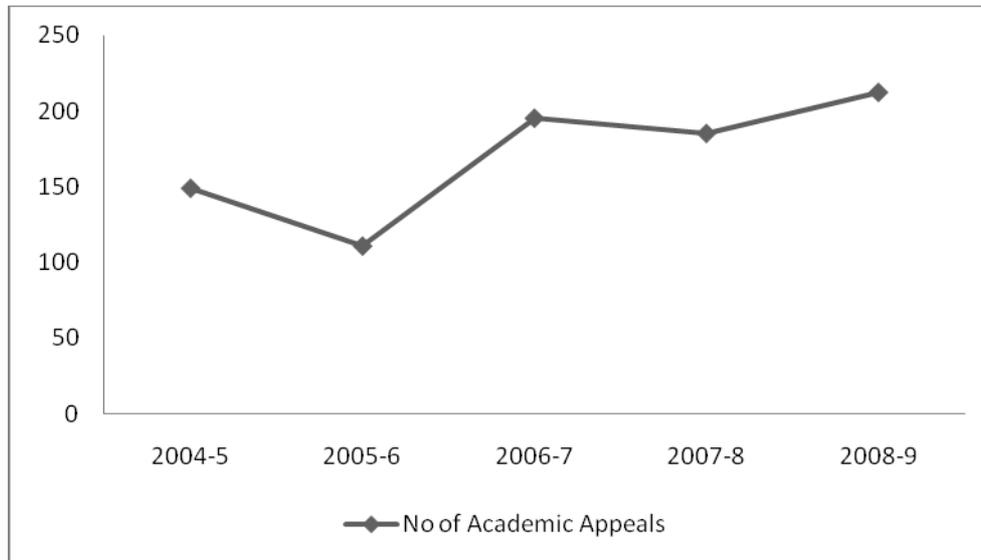
One complaint found to be justified concerned misrepresentation of course content to a student who did not receive the level of industry experience that he had been led to expect. In this instance, remedial arrangements were put in place, including the payment of expenses to the student of £500 per week for the period of a placement experience.¹ This experience serves to highlight the importance of accuracy when describing courses to prospective students and it should be remembered that the University is subject to consumer protection law in these matters. There are a number of cases (at other institutions) which have reached the courts and resulted in compensation payments to students.

Even complaints which are found not to be justified can identify areas where improvements might be made. One complaint resulted in the review of arrangements for students on placement and in particular of channels for raising concerns about experiences whilst away from the University. Another complaint was from a student who felt she had been misled by over-enthusiastic comments on her work into thinking she would be awarded a higher grade than she subsequently received. This incident resulted in a review of procedures and guidance offered to staff.

In general, where decisions are made which, although right and reasonable, might be perceived negatively by students, it is always good practice to provide as full an explanation as possible at the time. Increased understanding tends to reduce the likelihood of further complaint. Where student complaints are found to be justified, they are most effectively resolved with a swift response, acknowledging what went wrong and a genuine effort to put things right. If a complaint can be resolved without the student having to resort to the formal complaints procedure it usually leads to a more satisfactory outcome for all concerned. Handling a complaint openly and efficiently, without resentment and without seeming to be unduly defensive, and ensuring the student is kept informed in a timely way can do a great deal to reduce the level of dissatisfaction which generated the complaint in the first place.

¹ Note: payments made to student in settlement of complaints are always borne by the School in question.

Academic Appeals



Total Number of Appeals

	Total	PGR	PGT	UG	International	Home students:			F	M
						Ethnic Minority	White	Not Known		
	212	16	28	168	66	49	90	7	96	116
%	100	8	13	79	31	23	42	3	45	55
% 2007-8	100	13	15	72	22	31	42	5	50	50

Faculty	Total	PGR	PGT	UG	International	Home students:			F	M
						Ethnic Minority	White	Not Known		
EPS	24	5	9	10	15	2	7		3	21
FLS	20	1	1	18	3	9	8		9	11
Humanities	80	5	14	61	36	11	28	5	28	52
MHS	88	5	4	79	12	27	47	2	56	32
Total	212	16	28	168	66	49	90	7	96	116

Decision Appealed Against

	Total	%	% 07-8	PGR	PGT	UG	International	Home students:			F	M
								Ethnic Minority	White	Not Known		
Degree classification/qualification awarded	68	32	70	2	12	54	20	16	30	2	27	41
Other decision of board of examiners/progress committee	60	28		6	11	43	17	12	29	2	30	30
Exclusion due to academic failure	64	30	27	1	1	62	17	18	26	3	35	29
Exclusion due to work and attendance	4	2		1		3	3	1			1	3
Progression issue	11	5		5	4	2	8		3		2	9
Other	5	2	3	1		4	1	2	2		1	4
Total	212	100		16	28	168	66	49	90	7	96	116

Grounds for Appeal

	Total	%	% 07-8	PGR	PGT	UG	International	Home students:			F	M
								Ethnic Minority	White	Not Known		
Mitigating Circumstances	156	60	53	9	18	129	52	41	58	5	65	91
Procedural Irregularity	58	22	12	3	6	49	10	15	31	2	30	28
Bias	21	8	2	7	4	10	6	5	10		9	12
Poor Supervision	27	10	6	6	6	15	8	8	11		9	12
Combined	-	-	31	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Note: Students can cite more than one ground for appeal.

Note: Previous year's data is not directly comparable as appeals citing multiple grounds were included in a 'combined' category.

Outcome of Appeal

	Total	%	PGR	PGT	UG	International	%	Home students:			%	F	M	
								Ethnic Minority	White	Not Known				
Dismissed - invalid grounds	9	4		1	8	2	3	4	8	3		3	4	5
Dismissed - no substance	103	49	11	15	77	32	48	27	55	40	4	44	40	63
Upheld and referred back to the School for review of the decision Note: In all these cases, the original decision was changed by the School on review.	32	15	3	2	27	8	12	8	16	15	1	17	20	12
Upheld and resolution offered	16	8	1	3	12	8	12	4	8	4		4	8	8
Decision changed before appeal formally considered	11	5		2	9	4	6	2	4	3	2	3	5	6
Ongoing at end of 2008-09	20	9	1	4	15	8	12	3	6	9		10	7	13
Withdrawn/not pursued	21	10		1	20	4	6	1	2	16		18	12	9
Total	212	100	16	28	168	66		49		90	7		96	116

Outcome of appeals which included mitigating circumstances in the grounds

	Total	%	PGR	PGT	UG	International	Home students:			F	M
							Ethnic Minority	Not Known	White		
Dismissed - invalid grounds	5	3			5	1	3		1	3	2
Dismissed - no substance	75	48	6	8	61	24	24	2	25	25	50
Ongoing	17	11		4	13	7	2		8	7	10
Upheld and resolution offered	13	8	1	2	10	6	4		3	6	7
Withdrawn/not pursued	9	6		1	8	3			6	2	7
Upheld and referred back to the School for review of the decision	27	17	2	1	24	7	7	1	12	18	9
Resolved by School before formal consideration was completed	10	6		2	8	4	1	2	3	4	6
Total	156		9	18	129	52	41	5	58	65	91

Number of Cases submitted by Students for Review of Faculty Decision

	Total	07-8	PGR	PGT	UG	International	Home students:			F	M
							Ethnic Minority	White			
Total	22	26	6	6	10	7	5		10	8	14

In all 22 cases, the Faculty decisions were all upheld.

The objective of the Academic Appeals process is to ensure that all students are assessed fairly and consistently. Academic Appeals are allowed on four grounds: Mitigating Circumstances, Bias, Procedural Irregularity and Poor Supervision. Mitigating Circumstances should be considered only if there was a good reason why it was not possible to make them known to the examiners in advance of the assessment concerned.

The academic judgement of examiners can not be challenged.

Academic appeals can be raised by students informally within their School, giving the opportunity for dialogue with the student leading to explanation and understanding, or to rectify errors in procedure.

Students who have been unable to resolve an appeal to their satisfaction informally, or who feel unable to raise it within their School for whatever reason, have access to the formal Appeals process *via* their Faculty, and it is the latter which is reported on here. Students who remain dissatisfied with the Faculty's decision may seek a review of the decision by the Registrar & Secretary or his nominee, after which the internal University processes are complete. Students may then seek review by the Office of the Independent Adjudicator.

If, at any stage in the internal processes, it becomes clear that the Appeal is justified and a resolution is possible, Boards of Examiners are empowered to act and do not have to wait for a process to 'run its course'.

There was a total of 212 formal Academic Appeals in 2008-9, an increase of 15% (27 appeals) over 2007-8. The total number of students at the University increased by 5% in the same period.

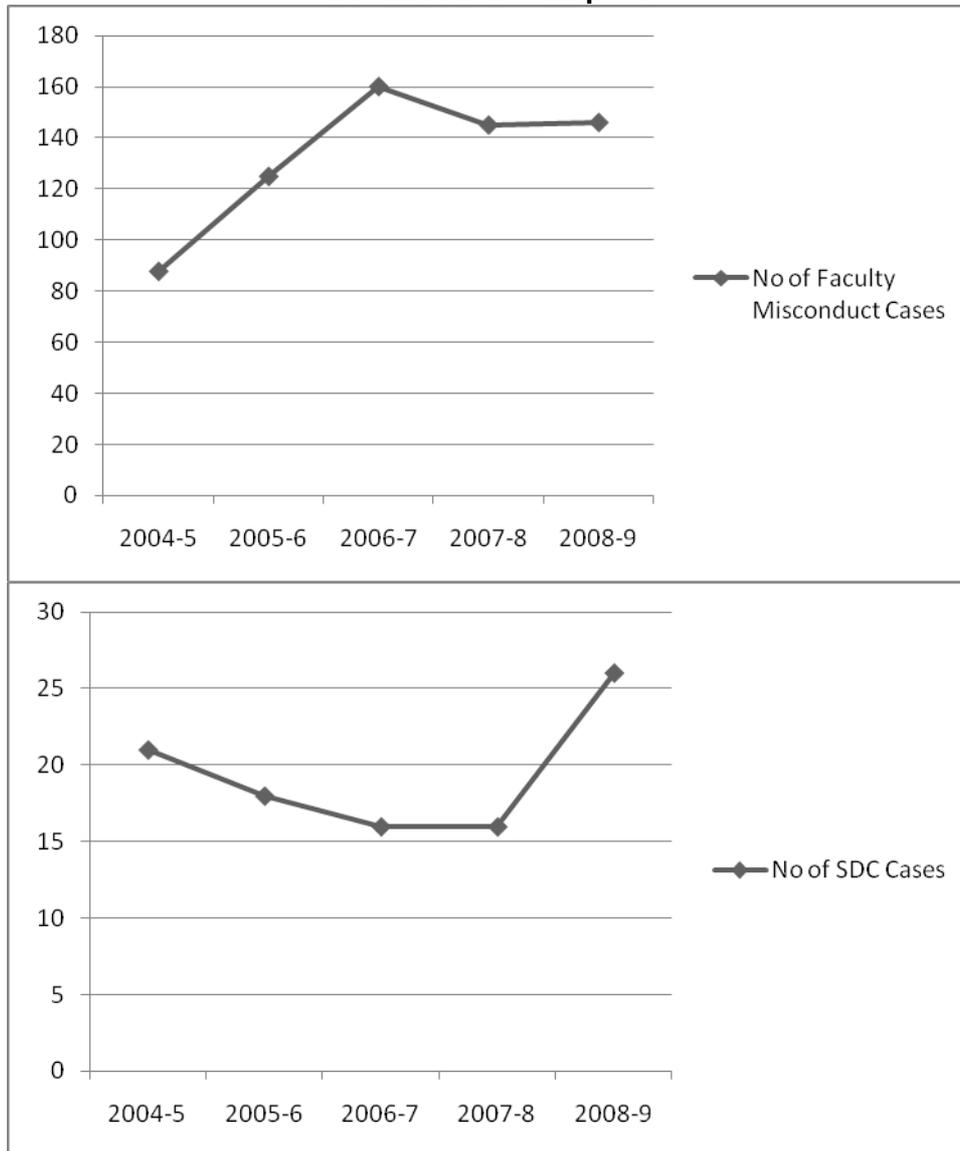
The substance of the Academic Appeals are evenly divided between concerning the level or classification of the final award being made, other decisions of Boards of Examiners (e.g. not allowing resit examinations) or academic failure. Mitigating circumstances are cited in 60% of academic appeals.

42% of appeals were made by home white students, 31% by international students and 31% by home ethnic minority students. The student body comprises 58% home white students, 24% international students and 14% home ethnic minority students. The over-representation of international and ethnic minority students submitting appeals has been a common feature in every annual report.

In total, half of the appeals made were dismissed by the Faculties and 23% were upheld in part or in full. Of these latter, the School was usually invited to reconsider the case and, in all cases, the original decision made by the School was changed. In 11 (5%) instances, the School pre-empted the formal hearing of the appeal by reviewing it as soon as it was received by the Faculty.

Of the appeals which were dismissed because they had no substance to them, 44% were made by home white students, 48% were made by international students and 55% were made by home ethnic minority students.

Conduct and Discipline



[Note: SDC = Student Discipline Committee]

Number of Misconduct Cases

	Total	07-8	PGR	PGT	UG	International	Home students:				
							Ethnic Minority	White	Not Known	F	M
Faculties	146	145	2	93	51	93	20	28	5	65	81
%			1	64	35	64	14	19	3	45	55
SDC	26	16	2	9	15	15	2	6	3	15	11
%			8	35	58	58	8	23	12	58	42
Total	172	161	4	102	66	108	22	34	8	80	92
%			2	59	38	63	13	20	5	47	53

Faculty Cases

Type of Misconduct

	Total	%	% 07-8	PGR	PGT	UG	International	Home students:				
								Ethnic Minority	White	Not Known	F	M
Collusion	23	16	8		13	10	15	4	3	1	3	20
Fabrication/Falsification	5	3	0.5			5	1		4		4	1
Non academic misconduct	1	1	0.5			1			1			1
Plagiarism	117	80	91	2	80	35	77	16	20	4	58	59
Total	146	100	100	2	93	51	93	20	28	5	65	81

Outcome of Faculty Misconduct Cases

	Total	%	% 07-8	PGR	PGT	UG	International	Home students:			F	M
								Ethnic Minority	White	Not Known		
In breach of regulations	127	87	86	2	84	41	83	18	22	4	55	72
Not guilty	17	12	12		8	9	8	2	6	1	8	9
Other	1	1	2		1		1				1	
Ongoing at end of 2008-9	1	1	-			1	1				1	
Total	146			2	93	51	93	20	28	5	65	81

Penalties Imposed (more than one penalty can be imposed)

	Total	%	PGR	PGT	UG	International	Home students:			F	M
							Ethnic Minority	White	Not Known		
Reprimand & Warning	11	8	1	4	6	5	2	4		5	6
Mark reduction	32	22	16	16	5	3	13	11		15	17
Mark of zero for specific piece of work	85	58		68	17	67	9	9		33	52
Mark of zero for module	4	3	1		3	1	1	1		1	1
No reassessment for specific piece of work	7	5		4	3	5	2				7
No reassessment for module	1	1			1		1				1
No reassessment or substitution	6	4	1	5		4	1		1	2	4

	Reprimand & Warning	Mark reduction	Mark of zero for specific piece of work	Mark of zero for module	No reassessment for specific piece of work	No reassessment for module	No reassessment or substitution
Collusion	2	1	9	2	4	1	
Plagiarism	8	26	76	2	3		6
Fabrication/Falsification		5					
Non academic misconduct	1						
Total	11	32	85	4	7	1	6

Three students submitted requests for reviews of the Faculty decisions. The Faculty's action was upheld in each case.

Student Discipline Committee Cases

Type of Misconduct

	Total	%	% 07-8	PGR	PGT	UG	International	Home students:			F	M
								Ethnic Minority	White	Not Known		
Cheating in an examination	10	38	56		3	7	9			1	8	2
Collusion	2	8	-		2		2					2
Non-academic misconduct	4	15	-			4			4			4
Plagiarism	10	38	44	2	4	4	4	2	2	2	7	3
Total	26			2	9	15	15	2	6	3	15	11

Outcome of SDC misconduct cases

	Total	%	% 07-8	PGR	PGT	UG	International	Home students:			F	M
								Ethnic Minority	White	Not Known		
In breach of regulations	25	96	100	2	8	15	14	2	6	3	15	10
Not guilty	1	4			1		1					1
Total	26			2	9	15	15	2	6	3	15	11

	Total	%	PGR	PGT	UG	International	Home students:			F	M
							Ethnic Minority	White	Not Known		
Reprimand & Warning	10	38	1	1	8	4		3	3	6	4
Mark of Zero for Piece of Work	10	38	1	5	4	8		1	1	5	5
Mark of Zero for Module		0			1		1			1	
Mark of Zero for All Sem Exams		0			2	2				2	
No Reassessment	4	15	1	3		3		1		1	3
Reduction in Classification	4	15		1	3	2			2	3	1
Exclusion	6	23		2	4	3	1	2		4	5
Fine	1	4		1				1			2
Community Service	3	12			3			3			3
Future Good Conduct	2	8			2			2			2

Type of Misconduct	Reprimand & Warning	Mark of Zero for Piece of Work	Mark of Zero for Module	Mark of Zero for All Sem Exams	No Reassessment	Reduction in Classification	Fine	Community Service	Future Good Conduct	Exclusion
Cheating in an examination	3	7		2	3	2				1
Plagiarism	4	3	1		1	2				3
Collusion										1
Non-academic misconduct	3						1	3	2	1

Three students submitted requests for reviews of the decisions of the Student Discipline Committee. Such reviews are dealt with by an Appeal Board. In all three cases, the Appeal Board upheld the decisions of Student Discipline Committee.

The Conduct and Discipline of Students Regulations makes provision for a range of penalties, from reprimand and warning to exclusion. Faculties have access to more severe penalties than Schools, and the Student Discipline Committee of Senate (SDC) has access to the most severe penalties, including reduction in degree classification or level of award, suspension and exclusion from the University.

Schools handle allegations of academic misconduct where the student is an undergraduate at level 1 or level 2 and has not previously been found guilty of academic misconduct. If the student is an undergraduate at level 3 or above, or has previously been disciplined for academic misconduct, the case is handled by the Faculty. Faculties also handle first offences from PGT students. Subsequent offences by PGT students and more serious offences by undergraduate students are referred to the SDC. The SDC also handles *all* cases of cheating in examinations. If a research student is suspected of academic misconduct, the evidence is first screened in accordance with the Code of Practice for Dealing with Complaints of Academic Misconduct. The case may then be referred to the SDC.

Non academic misconduct most commonly occurs in the Halls of Residence, where it is dealt with by Wardens, the Director of STARS and ultimately by Student Discipline Committee. Heads of Schools & Deans of Faculties, the Librarian, the Director of IT Services and the Registrar (or their nominees) also have the power to deal summarily with disciplinary matters that fall within their areas of activities and to impose penalties on students.

There were 172 cases of academic misconduct handled by Faculties and the SDC in 2008-9 of which 63% concerned international students and 59% taught postgraduate students. 80% of the cases dealt with by Faculties and 38% of those dealt with by the SDC involved allegations of plagiarism. 87% of students dealt with by Faculties were found guilty (ie in breach of regulations), as were 96% of those appearing before SDC.

Mitigating circumstances cannot change a judgement from 'in breach' to 'not in breach' of regulations, but they can serve to reduce the severity of the penalty. Sometimes circumstances in a student's personal life

which merit a more lenient approach being taken emerge for the first time in the course of an investigation. Alternatively, it is sometimes the case that mistakes in handling a case at an earlier stage, or failures in the quality of provision by the University to a student must be taken into account. To avoid such situations arising it is very important to follow correct procedure, maintain comprehensive, accurate and clear records and, above all, observe the requirements of natural justice which imposes a duty to act fairly. In practice, this means that: the student should have full information of the case against them, adequate warning of a hearing should be given so that the student has time to prepare, both sides should hear each the evidence pertaining to the case in its entirety and clear reasons for decisions taken should be given. Those making the decision must be unbiased and decisions taken must be demonstrably reasonable and not irrational.

Each Annual Report has highlighted the over-representation in the proportion of international and PGT students in the total number of misconduct cases – this continues to be a continues to be a matter of concern.

Fitness to Practice

Fitness to Practice cases are reported separately from purely conduct and discipline cases because they often emerge from ill health circumstances, although they can include conduct and discipline matters.

Fitness to Practise cases usually originate in the Faculty of Medical and Human Sciences because of the nature of the programmes of study undertaken in that Faculty.

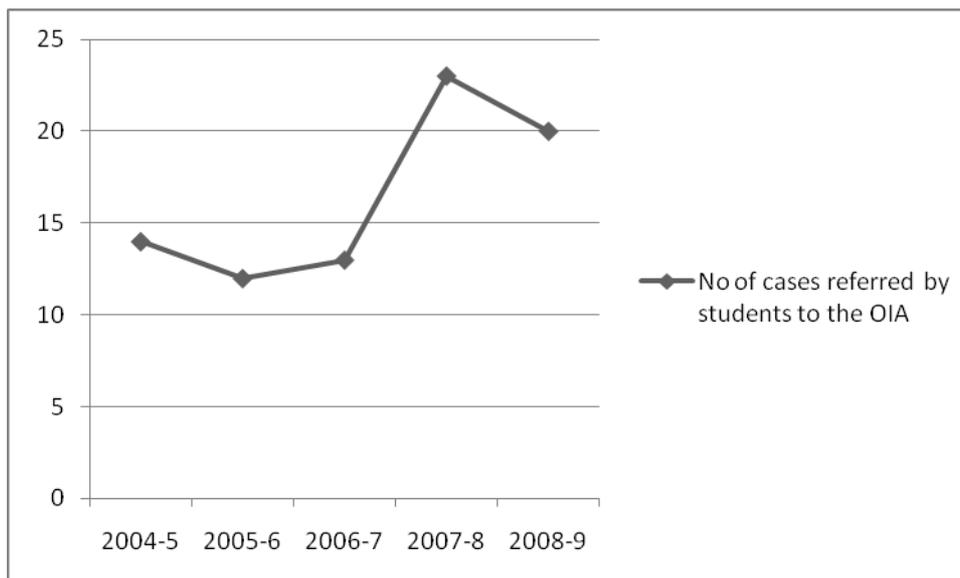
Number of Fitness to Practise Cases

	Total	07-8	Manchester Medical School	Nursing, Midwifery and Social Work	UG	Home students:		F	M
						Ethnic Minority	White		
Total	8	15	2	6	8	3	5	6	2

Outcome of Cases

	Total	07-8	MMS	NMSW	UG	Home students:		F	M
						Ethnic Minority	White		
Fit to Practise (FTP)	4	9	2	2	4	3	1	2	2
Fit to continue with conditions	-	3							
Not currently FTP	1	-		1	1		1	1	
Deemed not FTP and excluded	3	1		3	3		3	3	
Pending	-	1							
Not pursued/withdrawn	-	1							
Total	8	15	2	6	8	3	5	6	2

**Cases taken by students to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA)
(after completion of internal procedures)**



	Total	07-8	Cert	PGR	PGT	UG	International	Ethnic minority	Not Known	White	F	M
Total	20	23	1	4	5	10	6	5	1	8	9	11
%	100	100	5	20	25	50	30	25	5	40	45	55

Outcome	Total	%	% excl. not eligible	% 07-8	Cert	PGR	PGT	UG	International	Home students:				
										Ethnic minority	Not Known	White	F	M
Case withdrawn	1	5	7	-		1				1			1	
Not eligible	5	25	0	9			2	3	1	1		3	4	1
Not justified	13	65	87	61	1	3	2	7	4	3	1	5	4	9
Partly justified	1	5	7	26			1		1					1
Justified	-	-	-	4										
Total	20				1	4	5	10	6	5	1	8	9	11

Of the 20 complaints made by students to the OIA against the University:

- 13 related to issues concerning academic status/assessment/grades
- 5 related to service issues/contractual obligations
- 2 related to academic misconduct issues

In respect of the case which was found to be partly justified, the University was required to apologise for the length of time taken to deal with the original appeal.

Annual Report by the OIA

Data from the OIA's annual report for 2008 provides some context within which to view the Manchester cases. The OIA reported that in 2008

- The number of complaints they received rose by 23% to 900.
- There was an over-representation of complaints from postgraduate students (39% compared with 22% PG registrations in HEIs in England and Wales). [Note: for the University of Manchester, 26% of all student complaints to the OIA were from PGR students compared with 10% in the student body]
- In 2008 there was a 17% reduction in the average number of days to deal with an eligible complaint (171 days to 142 days).
- At the end of 2008 the OIA had received 15 Judicial Review applications since its inception. Of these, none has succeeded.

- Most complainants are students of Business Administration, subjects allied to Medicine and Law.
- Of the eligible complaints reviewed by the OIA in 2008:
 - 7 % were Justified (11% in 2007)
 - 16% were Partly Justified (15% in 2007)
 - 71% were Not Justified (65% in 2007)

	All Eligible Cases at the OIA	Manchester Eligible Cases 2008-09
Justified	7 %	0%
Partly Justified	16%	7%
Not Justified	71%	87%

The following quote is taken from the OIA's 2008 Report:

“Leaving aside academic judgement (where the OIA has no remit), we have reviewed a number of cases where there has been a clear reluctance to give timely feedback to underperforming postgraduate students. This creates false expectations of successful outcomes from thesis submission and is something that could be avoided. There are also failures by supervisors to keep appropriate minimum records of supervision meetings with students, a practice which impedes the review of the complaint handling.”

The number of internal appeals and complaints could be reduced significantly if these lessons could be learned.

Concluding Comments

There has been a steady increase in the overall caseload of academic appeals, conduct and discipline cases and student complaints. The bulk of the workload in handling these formal cases falls on Faculty staff but it must be inferred that the increasing number of formal cases is indicative of an even higher number of cases being handled by staff in Schools across the University. There has been a particular increase in the number of cases referred to the Student Discipline Committee of Senate.

Reassuringly, the outcome of cases referred by students to the OIA indicates that generally the University handles cases properly and reasonably.

Plagiarism continues to be the main type of academic misconduct, and mitigating circumstances are the main grounds proffered in academic appeals by students.

The increase in case load might be regarded as an inevitable consequence of the changing environment in higher education. Nonetheless, staff across the University can play a part in seeking to minimise the number of cases through the following:

1. **Do not admit students who are not properly qualified or prepared to undertake PGR studies.** Any student admitted to undertake research at the University will understandably have a reasonable expectation of completing successfully. To admit someone who does not have that realistic chance is, effectively, taking their fees under a false premise which is likely to result in disproportionate time and energy being spent on supporting the student and on subsequent appeals/complaints.
2. **Manage Expectations.** Problems are likely to occur where expectations do not match reality which can lead to dissatisfaction and complaints. Mismatch does not necessarily mean that the University is failing – student may have unrealistic expectations.
So how to ensure expectations are realistic?
 - Make sure recruitment activities and promotional material do not over-sell provision but reflect accurately the nature of what is provided. All published material – prospectus, handbooks, codes of practice, supervisory statements etc all form part of the contract with the student.
 - Comprehensive induction on arrival is vital in making students aware of what they can expect.
3. **Do what has been promised** Eg in provision of facilities, following correct procedures, meeting timescales etc. To do otherwise might be a breach of contract.
4. **Deliver in accordance with current standards** Be consistent with latest institutional practices and standards; follow fair and correct procedures in for eg monitoring and reporting on progress of students, observe the requirements of natural justice.
5. **Deal with underperforming students.** It is most important that students are informed promptly and clearly when their progress is not satisfactory. If no improvement, follow due procedure but do not let failing students continue. Some of the most complex and difficult PGR cases arise when, for best of intentions, seriously weak students have been allowed to continue which creates false expectations of successful outcomes.
6. **Don't discriminate.** Just DON'T.
7. **Take complaints and appeals seriously.** All evidence is that the closer to the source the issue is addressed, the more likely it is that a resolution will be found. Resolve informally wherever possible.
8. **Treat Students with Respect by:**
 - Providing clear and accurate information to students in relation to course arrangements, including assessment and feedback
 - Providing students with full explanations of decisions taken and being willing to engage in dialogue with them to increase their understanding
 - Promptly acknowledging when things have gone wrong and seeking to rectify and/or apologise for errors
 - Avoiding inappropriate language, derogatory remarks or jokes that might cause offence.
9. **Keep records but remember the Data Protection and Freedom of Information Acts**
 - Keeping records is essential – the ability of the University to respond successfully to appeals and complaints is seriously compromised if there is a lack of records.
 - Make sure decisions about a student's progress are well documents.
 - Make sure all material retained as part of record is dated

- Make sure date and substance of relevant phone calls are recorded
- Ensure all email correspondence is conducted in appropriate language and tone – avoid colloquial language or adopting an over-familiar tone when corresponding to colleagues about a student.
- Don't make sloppy or injudicious notes
- Nothing is Confidential – marking something “Confidential” is no safeguard against disclosure.