

CAMPUS LIFE: SUMMARY AND UNIVERSITY DISCIPLINARY PANELS



You may already have an **Advice & Response Caseworker**, for example if you made a disclosure through *Report + Support*. In many cases, students first share what has happened and are then supported by their Caseworker to decide whether to make a formal complaint.

If you do not already have a Caseworker, you can still be connected with one.

They are available to support you throughout and beyond the disciplinary process, offering guidance and advice.



Alongside this, a **Conduct and Discipline Caseworker** will be involved. Their role is different: they manage the disciplinary case itself. They organise the paperwork, prepare the case file for the Panel, and ensure the process runs according to the University's Conduct and Discipline Regulations- [Regulation XVII](#). They focus on guiding the case through the disciplinary process, making sure everything is handled fairly, consistently, and within the right timescales.



The University may consider your case through either a Summary Disciplinary Panel ("SDP") or a University Disciplinary Panel ("UDP"):

- SDPs deal with cases that can be appropriately resolved without a full University Disciplinary Panel. These are smaller Panels, usually made up of two or three staff members. [SDP Procedure](#)
- UDPs deal with serious or complex misconduct. Larger Panels, usually five members chaired by senior staff. [UDP Procedure](#)



Fast-track cases

Not every case goes to a Panel.

In some situations, an Authorised University Officer ("AUO") can deal with the matter directly through a fast-track process.



This is used when:

- The case is straightforward and suitable to be resolved without a full Panel hearing
- The likely outcome will be limited to the sanctions the AUO is authorised to impose such as a warning, an apology, an undertaking, a no-contact order, or training within the fast-track process.
- A full Panel hearing is not considered necessary.
- If your case is handled this way, you will not be asked to attend a hearing. You will still be kept informed of the outcome if it directly affects you (for example, a no-contact order).

HOW A CASE PROGRESSES

1 PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT

A senior member of staff (Authorised University Officer "AUO") considers the allegation and decides whether it falls under [Regulation XVII](#). They may resolve it informally or decide it needs further investigation. This decision will look at things like who was involved, how long ago it happened, and what evidence is available. If it's decided that an investigation won't go ahead, that doesn't mean the behaviour didn't happen — it simply means there isn't enough information or evidence to take the case forward.



2 INVESTIGATION (IF REQUIRED)

An Investigator is appointed to gather evidence, review documents, and interview those involved. If you have accessed counselling or other therapeutic support following the alleged incident, any notes or records from those sessions will only ever be included if you give your explicit agreement.



3 DECISION ON REFERRAL

Once the investigation report is complete, the AUO decides whether there is a potential case to answer. If so, they refer it to either an SDP or UDP. Any outcome is approved by the Director of Campus Life.



4 NOTICE ON REFERRAL

If referred, the Conduct and Discipline Caseworker coordinates the hearing. The Respondent is expected to attend. You will be told when the hearing is and asked whether you want to attend.

YOUR ROLE AT A HEARING

ATTENDANCE IS OPTIONAL

You may be invited to attend as a Witness. There is no requirement to attend, but you will be asked to indicate whether you wish to. If you do not attend, you may be asked to provide reasons why.

IF YOU DO NOT ATTEND

The Panel can still consider your earlier evidence (e.g. your statement from the investigation). However, if the Panel or the Respondent had questions they cannot ask you, this may limit how your evidence can be weighed.

SAFEGUARDS

If you do attend, you can request adjustments such as joining online, being in a separate room, or not being visible to the Respondent.

QUESTIONS

If you attend, you may be asked questions by the Panel. You will not be directly questioned by the Respondent- all questions are directed through the Chair.

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL

Normally, new written statements are not accepted by the Reporting Party after the investigation has concluded, especially in very serious cases, where there has already been a full investigation. This is because the Case Presenter cannot speak to new material, and the Panel and/or Respondent may not be able to test it.

HOW YOUR PARTICIPATION MAY HELP

Whilst every case is different, your attendance at the Panel as a witness can be very helpful. It allows the Panel (and, where appropriate, the other student) to ask questions, helping them to clarify and fully understand your account.

The High Court has recognised that relying only on a written statement- without the opportunity for questions- can result in an unfair process in some University cases. This is because your account may be treated as hearsay ('second-hand' information), and the Panel may not be able to give it the same weight as evidence that has been discussed and tested.*

We know that attending a hearing can feel daunting. University disciplinary proceedings are not legal processes, and the Panel's role is to understand what happened in a fair and supportive way. The University can put measures in place to help you take part in a way that feels safe and manageable, such as attending in person or remotely, with appropriate support. It's a good idea to talk through your options with your Caseworker and consider both practical and wellbeing factors before deciding how you would like to participate.

** AB v University of XYZ [2020] EWHC 2978 (QB). Full judgment available [here](#)*

At the hearing

The Conduct and Discipline Caseworker supports the panel administratively, ensuring the hearing follows procedure and that records are accurate.

The Case Presenter (usually the Investigator) outlines the case.

The Respondent gives their response.

You may be invited as a Witness after the Respondent's statement. You will not be directly questioned by the Respondent; all questions are directed through and approved by the Chair.

Safeguards are available: you may attend online, from a separate room, or with your camera off.

In UDPs, you may choose to submit an Impact Statement. This focuses on the effect of the misconduct on you, not on proving the facts. The Panel only sees it if misconduct is found, when deciding on penalty. The Respondent may not see it at the hearing, however it is disclosable later (for example, if they appeal).

After the hearing



- You are normally informed of the outcome within 10-15 working days.
- If misconduct is found, the Panel may impose outcomes such as a warning, an apology or a no-contact order, and in more serious cases, expulsion.
- You will likely be informed of the outcome-especially anything that directly affects you.
- The Respondent may appeal.

Support

Making a disclosure and taking part in a disciplinary process can be emotionally demanding. You may feel uncertain, anxious, or even drained by the formality of the steps involved. It is important to know that you are not expected to manage this alone. The University has dedicated staff and independent services to guide you, answer your questions, and help you look after your wellbeing. Alongside the Caseworkers managing the process, there are people you can turn to for confidential advice, practical guidance, and emotional support whenever you need it.



- **Advice & Response Caseworker:** your ongoing pastoral support.
- **Conduct and Discipline Caseworker:** manages the case process and ensures fairness.
- **Students' Union Advice Service:** Independent advice.
- **Mental Health Support Team:** Counselling and mental health support.



What is a preliminary assessment?

A senior member of staff called the Authorised University Officer reviews the report to decide whether it falls under Regulation XVII and whether it needs a full investigation or can be handled informally.

What if no investigation happens?

The AUO looks at who is involved, how long ago the reported behaviour happened, what evidence or practical lines of enquiry are available, and any other relevant information.

If the AUO decides not to investigate this does not mean misconduct did not occur. It means there is not enough information, evidence, or viable enquiries to progress the case. You will be told the decision, the reasons, and offered support to discuss what it means for you.

Can I submit more evidence after the investigation?

Normally, no. Once the investigation is complete, new written statements from the Reporting Party are not usually accepted, especially in very serious cases where there has already been a full investigation. This is to ensure fairness, as the Case Presenter cannot speak to new material and the Panel and/or the Respondent may not be able to test it.

Do I have to attend the hearing?

We know deciding whether to attend can feel overwhelming, and your wellbeing is the most important thing. In short, no — attendance is optional. If you choose not to attend, the Panel can still consider your written statement, and you will be asked to confirm you received the hearing information and to give a reason if you do not attend.

If you are absent, the Panel may rely more on your written statement rather than a live account, which can change how your information is weighed. It also means there is no opportunity for questions. Please discuss the options and any safe ways to participate with your Caseworker before deciding.

What if I don't feel comfortable being in the same room as the Respondent if I decide to attend?

Most hearings are held online rather than in-person. You can request safeguarding adjustments such as, having your camera switched off. The Chair will ensure you are not directly questioned by the Respondent as all questions are directed through the Chair.



What if I have a disability or health condition?

If you have a disability, long-term health condition, or mental health condition, you can request adjustments to make sure you can participate fully. This might include extra time to give your evidence, the option to submit a written statement instead of attending, or other tailored arrangements. Please speak to your Caseworker to explore further so any adjustments can be approved before the hearing.

Can I ask for breaks during the hearing?

Yes. If you need extra breaks for wellbeing or medical reasons, you can let the Conduct and Discipline Caseworker know in advance or ask during the hearing. Panels are used to accommodating this.

What happens if I don't attend but the Respondent does?

The Panel can still reach a decision based on the evidence available. Non-attendance does not prevent a finding of misconduct, but it may mean the Panel cannot explore certain questions.

Can I bring a supporter with me to the hearing?

Yes - you can bring a supporter with you and are encouraged to do so. This could be a fellow student, member of staff or someone from the SU. They can be there to help you feel safe and supported, but they won't usually speak on your behalf unless the University has agreed to that in advance.

What is an Impact Statement?

An Impact Statement is your chance to explain how the incident has affected you — physically, emotionally, academically or socially. It is not used to decide whether misconduct occurred; it is only considered if the Panel finds misconduct, when deciding on any penalties, restrictions or continuing any restrictions already in place.

The Panel will consider your statement alongside other relevant information about the Respondent.

Your statement may not be shared with the other student during the hearing, though it could be disclosed later if there is an appeal. If you're unsure what to include or how it will be used, you can speak with your Caseworker for support.