

Other useful student rights leaflets

Additional student rights leaflets can be found at www.su.rmit.edu.au/student-rights.

These include:

- Special consideration
- Appeal against assessment
- How to write a letter
- International students

If you need to contact a Student Rights Officer please email student.rights@rmit.edu.au or call 03 9925 5004 to book an appointment.



Student discipline @ RMIT

Have you been accused of allegedly cheating or 'charged' with plagiarism? Have you observed examples of harassment, intimidation or bullying to yourself or others? RMIT Discipline Regulations cover these and other examples of academic and general misconduct.

What is misconduct?

Misconduct is broadly defined as: "any conduct within or outside the precincts of the University that is prejudicial to the good order and discipline of the University, or is likely to bring the University into disrepute".

Particular acts which are encompassed by this definition include (amongst others):

- Disobeying any reasonable order given to the student by any officer of the University.
- Obstructing or interfering with the proper use of the facilities of the University.
- Harassing any person on any grounds, including race, gender, ethnicity, sexual preference and religious or political belief.
- Intimidating or attempting to intimidate any person.
- Willfully, recklessly or negligently engaging in conduct which may cause bodily injury or damage to property.
- Copying or attempting to copy any copyright material, including computer software, without the permission of the University and in breach of the Copyright Act.

Academic misconduct by cheating includes:

- Impersonating or being impersonated by any person in or for the purposes of any assessment session.
- Plagiarizing the work of any other person.
- Taking material into any assessment session which is not specifically permitted.
- Or, more generally, the use or attempted use by or for any student by any means to gain an unfair advantage in any assessment where the means is contrary to the instructions for such assessment.

Who can hear a discipline charge?

Normally it is only senior members of staff who are able to hear a discipline charge. Senior Officers include Program Directors or Coordinators, Heads of Departments or Schools and Faculty Deans. Ordinary members of the academic and general staff including security guards do not have any formal authority to impose any punishment on you.

Discipline panel

- Two members nominated by the Vice-Chancellor from the membership of the Vice-Chancellor's Executive
- Six senior officers who are members of the academic staff appointed by the Vice-Chancellor
- Three students nominated by the Student Union Council ("the SUC") and appointed by the Vice-Chancellor;

A senior officer can refer a serious case to the RMIT University Discipline Board, which comprises of:

- one member from the Panel being one of the nominees of the Vice-Chancellor

Disclaimer

The information in this leaflet is a general guide only. RMIT is a very complex environment, and there are often a number of different rules which apply.

For more student rights information visit our website: www.su.rmit.edu.au/student-rights

For additional assistance drop into a Student Union Front Office to speak with a Student Liaison Officer.

City Higher Ed: Building 8, Level 3

Tivoli (Business): Building 108, Level 3

Carlton Campus: Building 57, Level 4

Brunswick: Building 514, Level 2

Bundoora: Building 204, Level 1

Or, send detailed information regarding your case to student.rights@rmit.edu.au

For enquiries call 9925 5004

If required, an appointment will be made for you with a Student Rights Officer

Has this leaflet been helpful? Join the Student Union and join the fight to improve your rights!

- from the Vice-Chancellor's Executive
- two senior officers from the Panel
- one student from the Panel.

Beware of informal discussions

Unfortunately many students are fooled into attending informal discussions about misconduct with members of staff. Often students are found "guilty" on the basis of answers they have given under pressure at informal interviews. No matter how outrageous the charges are against you, make sure that you never discuss any allegation of misconduct with an RMIT staff member until you have talked to your Student Rights Officer.

Penalties

The penalties that may be imposed are varied. They include:

- a reprimand
- a fine
- recovery of costs to the extent of any damage caused
- suspension
- exclusion
- expulsion
- failure of assessment session(s)
- failure of course(s)
- cancellation of course(s)
- or any other penalty deemed appropriate but which does not contradict the limitations of the above.

Your rights

The university MUST provide you with, at least ten (10) days prior to any meeting, adequate and written notification of:

- what exactly you have been accused of, and by whom
- the date of the hearing/interview

- who will be hearing your case and making a decision
- that you can seek assistance from the Student Union or the Student Services Group
- that you have the right to be heard, and to make a submission in writing or otherwise
- that you have the right to be accompanied by another person, a representative or advocate and/or friend
- that you have the right to be present during the hearing/interview.

They also MUST give you a copy of the discipline regulations.

If you are found guilty and a penalty is imposed, you have the right to appeal.

You also have the right to view any material that has been submitted as evidence against you before your case is heard. Please note that the details of any discipline charge are private and confidential. If you are concerned that your privacy is not being respected please speak to your Student Rights Officer.

The Student Union can help you

The Student Union will have a nominee on Discipline Board who will be briefed to ensure that none of your rights are violated. They will take an active part in the hearing and the decision making and will also observe the processes that take place to ensure that justice and fairness prevail.

The Student Union also employs Student Rights Officers who will help you by:

1. Discussing your case confidentially and clarifying issues
2. Outlining the regulations so that you understand exactly what your options are
3. Assisting you to obtain any material submitted in evidence against you
4. Scrutinising the material presented against you
5. Preparing your case for submission.

6. Formatting and photocopying your submission
7. Being present at the interview or hearing as your support person and/or as your representative
8. Assisting you in the preparation of an appeal if necessary (this would again involve all of the above)

Complete confidentiality is ensured and we always take direction from you. We have very strict policy regarding the ownership of cases which means that we never do anything without your approval/permission. Our role is to ensure that your rights are upheld at all times.

The penalties for misconduct can be quite severe including expulsion from the University, so do not take any chances.

Come and see the Student Rights Officers on your campus.

Plagiarism policy

In January 2003 the University introduced a policy specific to the issue of Plagiarism. Make sure you ask your lecturer, tutor or teacher to explain exactly what could be plagiarism in your specific course or program. Sometimes students make honest mistakes with referencing or citing sources used - this is not misconduct and you should not be punished for it. Also check your course guides for the plagiarism statement for the particular course.

International students

New Government regulations introduced in July 2001- the Educational Services for Overseas Students Act (ESOS Act) - mean that you can get reported to DIMIA for unsatisfactory progress. Facing a discipline charge and having a fail result recorded could mean that you are reported for unsatisfactory progress. Under the ESOS Act, if you are reported to DIMIA it is very likely that your visa will be cancelled. You must see a Student Rights Officer for advice as soon as you receive your letter or contact the Centre for International Students and Scholars and see a student adviser.

Free and confidential student services

RMIT Counselling Service

T/ 9925 4365 (BH) 9925 3999 (AH)

www.rmit.edu.au/counselling.

RMIT Health Service

T/ 9925 2297

www.rmit.edu.au/students/health

RMIT Study and Learning Centre

T/ 9925 3600

E/ studyandlearningcentre@rmit.edu.au

www.rmit.edu.au/studyandlearningcentre

Building 12.4.20

RMIT International Student Information and Support (ISIS)

T/ 9925 2078

www.rmit.edu.au/internationalsupport

RMIT (Dis)ability Liaison Unit

T/ 9925 1089

E/ dlu@rmit.edu.au

www.rmit.edu.au/disability

RMIT financial advisors

T/ 9925 2963 (City)

T/ 9925 7280 (Bundoora)

E/ student.finance@rmit.edu.au

Operating Procedures, Policies & Regulations

- Regulation 6.1.1 Student Discipline.
- Plagiarism Policy and Plagiarism Procedure
- Research degree

These policies can be downloaded from www.rmit.edu.au/polices.