

Academic Breach Interviews for Unit Coordinators

Unit Coordinators support new ECU students transition into university successfully by interviewing them if they commit acts of minor and unintentional plagiarism (i.e., an Academic Breach). These meetings are designed to be **low-stakes** and **educative**, not a formal interrogation. These students are unlikely to be aware that they breached ECU's academic integrity policies. These types of interviews should take approximately **15-30 minutes**.

If an Academic Breach case has been assigned to you via email, use the following steps as a template for meeting with students:

- 1) Start the interview by introducing yourself and confirming the purpose of the meeting, including confirming that a determination will only be made after the meeting. If you would like to record the meeting, permission must be requested from the student if it occurs via MS Teams. It is good practice to request the student use their camera for online meetings so you can verify their identity.
- 2) Record the name of the student's support person if they have one present. They can assist the student in responding, however you can insist you also need to hear directly from the student in the conversation. If the student does not have a support person present, let them know that they are allowed to have one. If they'd like one, you'll need to reschedule. Otherwise, otherwise the meeting can proceed.
- 3) Show the student the material in question and explain your concerns. Use the guide below for questions you can ask:

Interview guide
How did you complete your assignment?
This paragraph/sentence is very similar to text from this website. Can you tell me how you included this information in your work?
Paraphrasing means rewriting ideas or information in your own words. Can you tell me how you could paraphrase this piece of text in your words? (Use this as an opportunity to teach the student how they can improve this for future work)
We also need to reference when citing academic sources, including when paraphrasing. Do you know how to do this?
Have you been to academic skills workshops on writing and referencing before?
Was there anything else happening in your life that impacted your ability to complete this assignment? (Refer student to support services as required)

- 4) Provide students with materials to support better practices in the future, including:
 - [Paraphrasing tip sheet](#)
 - [ECU referencing guide](#)
 - [Academic skills and referencing workshops](#)
 - [ECU support services](#)

- 5) Explain the [possible outcomes](#) (as detailed in the Academic Misconduct Procedures) and that they will receive a notice about it to their ECU email account within 7 days. Explain to the student that a decision will be made after the interview has concluded.
- 6) Invite any final questions and thank them for attending.

After the meeting, use the link in your email to access the case in the Academic Misconduct Management system. If you choose to escalate the case in the system, it will be returned to the Academic Integrity team for reassigning to your Associate Dean Teaching and Learning. Input relevant details, including a summary of the meeting and the outcomes you've decided.

Once this has been submitted, you will receive an e-mail from academicintegrity@ecu.edu.au with suggested wording to send to the student advising them of the case decision and outcomes applied (usually within 48 hours). You can customise /contextualise the email, and then send it to the student as a formal advice.