

plagiarism and collusion

A summary of UEA regulations and procedures and how to get help when something goes wrong.

plagiarism & collusion

The university has strict rules regarding plagiarism and collusion and expects students to know and understand them. The full university policy can be found here: <https://portal.uea.ac.uk/learning-and-teaching/students/advice-on-difficulties/plagiarism-and-collusion>.

This information sheet summarises the policy and explains how it is enforced by the university.

what is plagiarism?

The university policy defines plagiarism as:

(a) The reproduction without acknowledgement, of work (including the work of fellow students), published or un-published, either verbatim or in close paraphrase. In this context, the work of others includes material downloaded from computer files and the internet, discussions in seminars, ideas, text and diagrams from lecture hand-outs.

(b) Poor academic practice which is unintentional.

(c) The reproduction, without acknowledgement, of a student's own previously submitted work.

Plagiarism can happen in 'open-book' examinations and/or coursework assessments including essays, reports, presentations, dissertations and projects.

what is collusion?

Collusion is a form of plagiarism involving unauthorised co-operation between at least two people. It does not include assessments which are designed to be collaborative that are undertaken in line with published requirements. The university policy says that collusion can take the following forms:

(a) The conspiring by two or more students to produce a piece of work together with the intention that at least one passes it off as his or her own work.

(b) The submission by a student of the work of another student, in circumstances where the latter has willingly lent the former the work and where it should be evident that the recipient of the work is likely to submit it as their own. In this case both students are guilty of collusion.

(c) Unauthorised co-operation between a student and another person in the preparation and production of work which is presented as the student's own.

(d) The commissioning and submission of work as the student's own where the student has purchased or solicited another individual to produce work on the student's behalf. This would include submitting an essay downloaded from an 'essay mill' or commissioning someone to write your essay for you.

The university uses plagiarism detection software called 'Turnitin' to investigate suspected cases of plagiarism/collusion.

what happens if you are accused of plagiarism and/or collusion?

- If a marker suspects Plagiarism or Collusion they will continue to mark the work as if it is not plagiarised. They will keep a separate copy of the annotated work as evidence and collect evidence for the school Plagiarism officer ("PO") to review. Evidence could include the original material which has been used or copied and/or a report from 'Turnitin'.
- The PO may look at other work you have completed on your course.
- The PO then reviews the evidence and decides whether the plagiarism is of a low, medium or high level.
- In low level cases the PO may decide not to call a meeting and will instead suggest an appropriate learning package. You can still request a meeting if you would prefer.

- If the level is classified as medium or high level, you will receive a letter inviting you to a plagiarism meeting to consider your case. With this letter you will usually receive a copy of the 'Turnitin' report and an annotated copy of the work in question so that you can see the areas of concern.

what happens at a plagiarism meeting?

- The case will be considered by a panel consisting of the school PO, who will chair the meeting, and a PO from another school. The marker of the work will also be present to explain his or her concerns. A staff member from the Hub will also attend as a note taker.
- You can be accompanied by a friend, for example a Union Advice Worker, to support you. Your friend cannot be a member of UEA academic staff, and cannot answer questions on your behalf.
- First, the marker will explain his/her concerns and you will have the opportunity to explain why you wrote the piece of work in the way that you did. It is a good idea to take any notes and earlier drafts of your work with you.
- You may be asked questions about your work by the panel or the marker. You can also ask questions to clarify what the problem is.
- After you have given your explanation and answered any questions, you will usually be asked to leave the meeting so that the panel can discuss the case. The marker will also leave the meeting at this point.

- The panel will then:

- consider all the evidence and decide what the most probable explanation is for the issues reported by the marker

- decide how serious they consider the offence to be, classifying it as high, medium or low level. They will take into account how experienced a student you are, the nature and extent of plagiarism, & whether it was intentional

- decide on the penalty, depending on how serious the offence is. You will be informed of the outcome of the meeting in writing within 5 working days.

possible outcomes

low level

The plagiarism officer will not impose a mark penalty and, in certain circumstances, you may be given the opportunity to resubmit the work as if for the first time, no later than 5 working days after the decision is made.

medium level - plagiarism

The mark is adjusted to reflect what is your own work. For a formative item of assessment, the offence should be recorded as a medium level plagiarism offence.

medium level - collusion

Where two or more students have worked together and it is impossible to determine who has produced the work, the pieces of work will be marked as they stand and the highest mark of those awarded will be divided equally.

If it can be determined who did the work then the mark will be apportioned appropriately. For formative work, a record of medium level collusion offence will be made.

High Level

Penalties vary depending on whether the offence is part of serial plagiarism and/or collusion. They can include being given a mark of 0. All high level offences are referred to the Senate Student Discipline Committee (SSDC) for further action. Where your course is part of a professional qualification, the Head of School may refer your case to a Fitness to Practise Panel.

if you deny plagiarism and/or collusion at the meeting

If after hearing your circumstances the plagiarism officer is persuaded that no offence has been committed, no further action will be taken. However, where a medium or high level case of plagiarism or collusion has been identified, the case will be referred to the SSDC for further action.

The university's disciplinary procedure and information on SSDCs is available on the Learning and Teaching Services website at: <https://portal.uea.ac.uk/documents/6207125/7465906/Section+3+Disciplinary+Procedures.pdf>.

if you do not agree with a decision

If you do not agree with the penalty (i.e. the level and consequences) you can appeal using a Stage 1 Appeal form to the Head of the Learning & Teaching Services if you are on a taught programme or the Head of PGR if you are a research student. The appeal should be submitted within ten working days of receiving the outcome. The Advice Service can provide help and advice on appealing a plagiarism penalty - our contact details are the end of this information sheet.

The academic appeals and complaints procedure can be viewed at:
<https://portal.uea.ac.uk/documents/6207125/7465906/Section+3+Academic+Appeals+and+Complaints+Procedure.pdf>.

how to get help with understanding plagiarism and collusion

It is important that you understand the procedures at UEA so that you do not unintentionally submit any work that contains plagiarism or collusion. You can access help to understand what plagiarism and collusion is on the UEA Student Support Service section of the UEA website at:

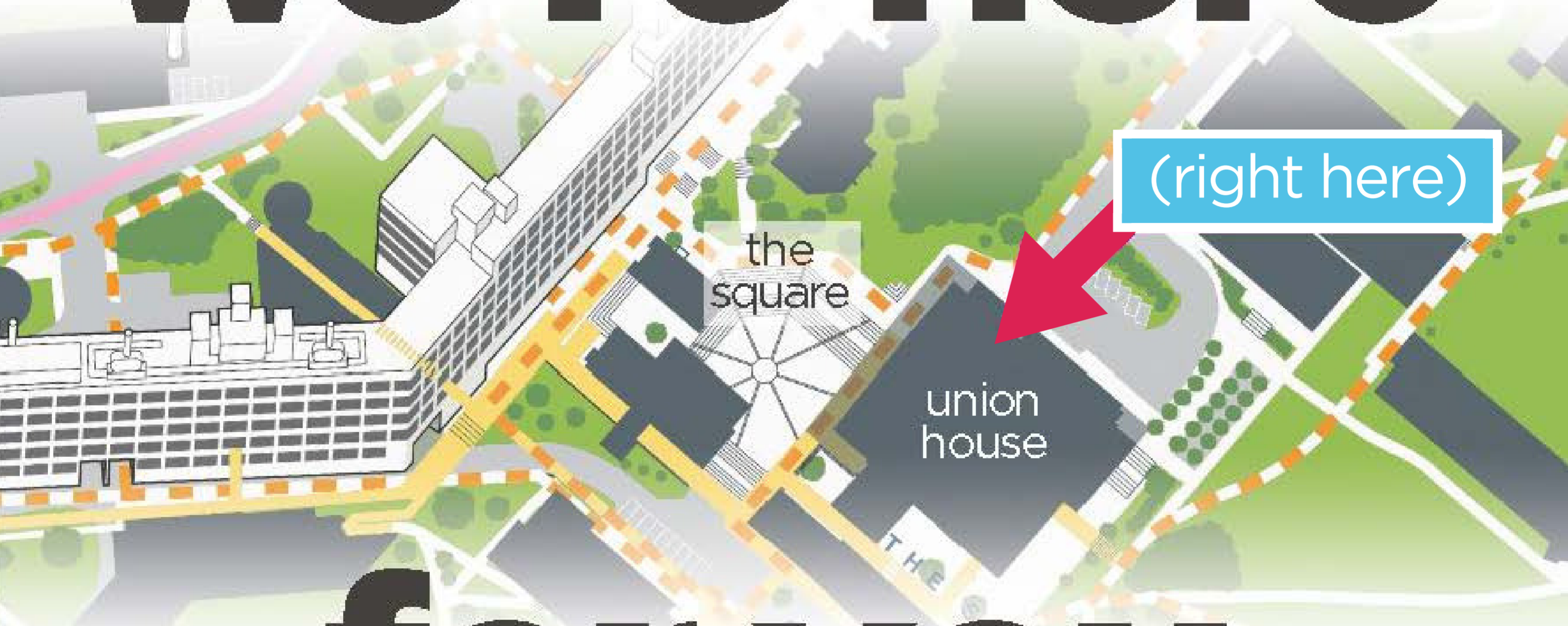
<https://portal.uea.ac.uk/student-support-service/learning-enhancement/study-resources/plagiarism>.

The Learning Enhancement Team can also offer support and guidance in person and you can book an appointment by contacting Student Support Services. You can email ask.let@uea.ac.uk, or call in to their reception to make an appointment: 01603 592761.

You can also talk to your personal adviser or the senior adviser in your school about plagiarism and collusion.

Come and see advice(su) if you have any questions about the plagiarism and collusion procedure.

we're here



for you

With

free, confidential, impartial advice

mon - fri 10.00 - 16.00, 01603 593463

advicecentre@uea.ac.uk

uea.su/advice

we've got your back