



Objective

The main objective of this document is to provide students with an overview of the process and resources applied when a student may have committed a misconduct in one of their courses while studying with UBC Vantage College.

In the case of potential misconduct by a Vantage student for any course in their program, *including disciplinary courses*, there is a Vantage-specific misconduct process parallel to our partner faculties. The [UBC policy on misconduct](#) outlines the campus-wide processes that all academic units must follow when handling misconduct cases.

Each report of suspected misconduct is regarded independently, depending on the nature of the assignment, specific course requirements, information provided by the instructor, any prior reports about student work, and the interviews with the student. Outcomes may vary for each situation, depending on these and other factors. Our goal is to support the principles of fairness, as described by the [BC Ombuds Office guide 'Fairness in Practice'](#) for administration in the public sector.

Note that while partner faculties may use the [UBC Diversionary Process for early interventions](#), *Vantage College does NOT use this process*, though we are a part of those communities of practice discussions and work in alignment with those principles.

Student responsibilities for their work

The learning environment at university is very different from high school or other education institutions. Some of the key differences are that you need to take more initiative with your work, advocate for yourself in the administrative systems, and you have a responsibility to adhere to different guidelines. UBC has specific [Expectations of Academic Integrity](#) for all students. *Past advice and practice from your previous studies may not reflect what is expected of you at UBC.*

For additional language learners, the use of specific resources for writing may be a unique area of difficulty. While you may have been permitted to use some tools to assist yourself in the past, these may not be acceptable for different assignments or courses. *You should carefully consider any form of assistance, whether from computer applications, tutors or writing services, or friends and family.*

In general, it is your responsibility to follow instructions given for each assignment and each course. It is also your responsibility to ask questions of the instructor to clarify any details that you do not understand. A key component for getting help is to reach out in advance of due dates to get additional clarification, which requires good time management, regular class attendance, and careful reading of all course

materials. UBC's [Student Declaration and Responsibility](#) is a part of the agreement between the university and all registered students, describing your responsibilities in greater detail.

Another area of difficulty for students is when working on group projects in a course. There may be parts of an assignment that you must complete individually and other parts that you must complete collaboratively with other group members. Careful distinction between these expectations is critical to avoiding issues with your work. Also, the responsibility for the integrity of group work lies with all group members – if one person submits something that is not their own, authentic work, then all group members may be held responsible for the issue. Again, good time management and careful proofreading of your collaborative works is important to avoid problems.

It is also important to remember that your responsibility to uphold the university standards for integrity does not end when you have submitted your assignment. Providing completed assignments to other students or sharing finished materials may also constitute academic misconduct and may carry similar consequences.

If your instructor for your course has questions about your work, it is best to meet with them as soon as possible to answer their questions and clarify anything that may have been misunderstood. You can also ask questions about the expectations for your assignment or course at that meeting. *Remember that it is important to continue with your course work even after there is a reported concern, so that you do not fall behind.*

Instructor responsibilities

It is your instructor's responsibility to ensure that your work is your own and that it follows the requirements for the assignment and the course. It is also your instructor's responsibility to identify any issues and to report problems with student work.

When an instructor feels that your work does not meet the standards and expectations for their course, they may want to speak to you about the issue. In your meeting with your instructor, they may have questions about how you completed the work and why you made specific decisions. Their main goal is to understand your approach to the work and resolve any misunderstandings you might have.

If your instructor does not feel that you are able to adequately explain your work, how you went about completing the assignment, or they have concerns that you are unable to answer for, they will report your work to the Academic Director for Vantage College for further consideration. Instructors are encouraged to report even small issues with student work, so that it is possible to discuss any challenges you are having and provide support for future assignments.

Academic Director responsibilities

Any reports about student work are sent to the Vantage College Academic Director, who is responsible for deciding what the next steps should be. Each suspected misconduct report is regarded independently,

in the context of the student's history, the nature of the assignment, the course requirements, any information provided by the instructor, and an interview with the student.

Outcomes may vary across cases, depending on these and other factors. The goal for each misconduct report is to support the principles of fairness, as described by the [BC Ombuds Office guide 'Fairness in Practice'](#) for administration in the public sector.

If your instructor reports an issue with your work, then you will be invited to a meeting with the Academic Director and the Manager of Advising to discuss the problem. The main goal of that meeting is to provide you with another opportunity to explain your work and any other circumstances that may have led to your decisions. You will be asked questions about the details of the work, how you approached the assignment, and your understanding of the problems reported.

Outcomes for suspected academic misconduct

At the end of the meeting, there are many possible outcomes, which will depend on a number of factors, including your ability to explain the issue, the type and grade weight of the assignment, and any other reports about your work. Depending on these factors, your instructor may choose to reduce your grade on the assignment, you may get a recommendation for additional language tutoring appointments at the Vantage College Writing Center or you may be referred to other supports.

If the Academic Director decides that the reported issue is very serious, they may also notify the [President's Advisory Committee on Student Discipline \(PACSD\)](#). This can happen in two different ways:

- 1) **Formal warning letter**

The Academic Director may opt to issue a formal letter of warning to you about the reported issues. In the letter, they will summarize the problems and any evidence or discussions of them. This letter does not have any immediate consequences to you and does not appear on your transcript: it is only sent to PACSD for their records. Should there be another serious issue in your future studies, this record may change the outcomes for that report and result in more serious consequences.

- 2) **Escalation to PACSD for their consideration**

If there is an accumulation of suspected misconduct reports or a serious issue with your work, the Academic Director may opt to escalate your case to PACSD. In this case, you will be notified via email by the Office of the University Counsel, provided with all the relevant evidence, and asked to attend a formal hearing via Zoom. At the hearing, there will be several committee members from across campus, including a student representative, who will ask you more questions about your work and any issues that contributed to the problem. You are permitted to have translation services via the AMS and/or support from an [AMS Ombudsperson office](#) representative for this hearing. *It is critical for you to reach out early if you require this help.*

Prior to notifying PACSD of your potential misconduct, you will receive a letter from the Academic Director via email about their decision and provided with a summary of information that was shared at your meeting.

You may also wish to reach out to your [Vantage College student advisor or our Wellbeing counsellor](#) for additional support during this time.

Appeals

The pathways for appeals of misconduct outcomes vary, depending on jurisdiction over the decision, according to the relevant UBC policy. There are three different decisions that a student may wish to appeal:

- (1) the grade assigned for the reported work,
- (2) the decision by the Academic Director to notify PACSD, and
- (3) the President's decision after a PACSD hearing.

A grade reduction for an assignment is the judgement of the instructor for the course. Any appeal of a grading decision must first be received by the instructor and must subsequently follow through the [UBC process for Academic Appeals](#).

You may also appeal the decision to send a warning letter with PACSD or to escalate a case to PACSD by submitting a letter to the Principal of Vantage College, outlining your reasons for appealing the decision.

Though there is no form or set requirements for this process, consistent with wider practice at UBC (e.g. admissions appeals), a misconduct appeal case will be considered for one of two reasons:

- (1) an error was made in the administration of the misconduct process (e.g. evidence was not evaluated accurately), or
- (2) there is new information you can offer in explanation of the reported issue.

You may have assistance from student advising or an AMS Ombuds Office student representative to write your appeal. The letter from the Academic Director to you regarding their decision to notify PACSD will include a deadline and an email address for your appeal to the Principal.

Appeals of the outcomes from a PACSD hearing should follow [their procedures](#) and are not adjudicated at the Vantage College or faculty level.