

When You Have Been Suspected of Academic Misconduct

A Checklist for Students

If you have been suspected of academic misconduct, it can cause anxiety and distress, especially if you are not aware of the procedures that will be followed and the resources available to support you. The checklist below gives you a quick overview of what you can expect from [NAIT's Academic Misconduct Procedure](#).

Key points to remember:

1. You are entitled to a fair process before a decision is made about the allegations of academic misconduct.
2. There are various resources available to help you understand academic misconduct procedures and to support you through the process. Please see Appendix A at the end of this checklist.
3. While the instructor can give educational (for minor offences) or punitive (for major offences) sanctions, disciplinary actions that go beyond the scope of the [Academic Misconduct Sanction Guide](#) can only be imposed by the Associate Dean Academic of your school or higher.
4. This document does not replace NAIT's Policies and Procedures, and it is only a summary of the process described in [SR 2.1 Academic Misconduct Procedure](#). You can also find [here](#) flowcharts for the Academic Misconduct and Appeal processes.

Before the first meeting with your instructor:

- When you are notified that your instructor suspects academic misconduct, this does not mean that you have been found guilty of anything. You are entitled to know what the allegations are and to tell your side of the story in response to those allegations.
- Seek support early. Reach out for help to understand the process, maintain your health and well-being, and, if you would like, explore who can accompany you through this process (see Appendix A).
- NAIT has the obligation to establish sufficient evidence to prove that you have committed academic misconduct. You should cooperate with the process, but the burden is on the institution to demonstrate that it's more likely than not that academic misconduct occurred.
- Be honest and forthright. If you have made a mistake, it is best to be accountable for your actions, share what you have learned from the experience, and reflect on how you will ensure it won't happen again.
- The instructor must invite you to a meeting to discuss the allegations. Make sure you feel you have enough time to prepare for the meeting, that you have been provided with a summary of the allegations (e.g. date of the incident, nature of the misconduct, etc.), and to respond to your instructor's first contact within 3 business days.
 - If you cannot make the date/time offered to you, or you feel that it is too short notice, you can ask the instructor for more time.

- If the instructor has not given you sufficient information about the purpose of the meeting, you can ask for clarification.
- If you're not comfortable meeting with your instructor, you can choose to provide your response via email.

Meeting with your instructor:

- Your instructor (or designated decision-maker) is the first to investigate the incident. They should tell you what the allegations are and why they believe you have committed academic misconduct. They should include sufficient details so you can provide a response (i.e. your side of the story).
- You should be given 3 business days from the instructor's (or designate) first contact to reply to the information presented by the instructor, and an additional (if applicable) 2 business days from their second contact.
- Make sure you understand what the allegations are. If anything is unclear, respectfully ask the instructor for clarification.
- It is often helpful to write out your response – either before or after the meeting. If you feel that you were not able to provide all the information you wanted to at the meeting, you can send a follow-up email (immediately after the meeting) to the instructor with anything that you may have missed or forgotten to mention.
- Before you leave the meeting, confirm the next steps in the process and approximate timelines with the instructor (or designate).

After the meeting with your instructor:

- After hearing your side of the story, the instructor (or designate) has 10 business days from that date to email you and the Academic Integrity Liaison with a decision. They can decide to take no further action if they determine that there has been no academic misconduct (the case would then be considered closed).
- If the instructor (or designate) determines that there has been a violation, they will decide if it can be resolved with a Restorative Practice instead of an assigned sanction. In making this decision, the instructor (or designate) should consider your intent to deceive (if any exists) and whether or not you accept responsibility for the conduct.
 - A Restorative Resolution can only be achieved if:
 - You accept responsibility for the Academic Misconduct; and
 - You and the instructor, as well as other harmed parties (if applicable), are all in agreement on a way to repair the harm caused.
 - In cases where Restorative Practice is used, the outcome will be documented for you and the Academic Integrity Liaison in writing.
 - If the instructor (or designate) decides the violation cannot be resolved with Restorative Practice:
 - They should outline to you, in writing:
 - The finding of “responsible” on a balance of probabilities,
 - The specifics of the Academic Misconduct,
 - The process followed,
 - The evidence collected,
 - The imposed Sanction(s) (in alignment with the Academic Misconduct Sanction Guide).

- The outline should also be sent to the Academic Integrity Liaison, who will review the findings for repeat occurrences, violations of Egregious Academic Misconduct, and likelihood of course failure.
 - In the case where a sanction will result in course failure and impact your academic progression or the ability to take a full course load, the decision will be reviewed by the Associate Dean Academic.
 - If patterns of Academic Misconduct or violations of Egregious Academic Misconduct are identified, additional sanctions may be imposed by the Associate Dean Academic, Dean, VP Academic (or designate).
 - The instructor's (or designate) decision is final unless grounds for appeal are met:
 - The decision or sanction was demonstrably biased,
 - New information has become available that would change the outcome of the case (withholding information that was known when the process began doesn't apply),
 - The appropriate process was not followed, was demonstrably unfair, or flawed.
- If you believe you meet one of the appeal grounds, you should email the Academic Integrity Liaison to request an Academic Misconduct Appeal Form and submit it within 10 business days of receiving a decision letter from your instructor (or designate).
-

Appendix A

If you require some advice or support, you are encouraged to access the following resources:

Can support you regarding the process for academic misconduct:

[NAITSA Student Academic Rights Advisor](#) - offers free, confidential, non-partisan support to students seeking guidance and/or options regarding their academic challenges. The Advisor will promote fairness and empower students to make informed decisions should they experience any bumps along their academic journey at NAIT. The Student Academic Rights Advisor is available for online and in-person appointments, and on a walk-in basis at the NAITSA Office (O-108) on NAIT Main Campus. If you prefer, you can email studentrights@nait.ca.

[NAITSA Vice President Academic](#) - as your student representative, the VP Academic can act as an advocate for you to NAIT and recommend policy changes, offer non-partisan support, and direct you to resources within the community. The VP Academic is available in person on NAIT Main Campus at the NAITSA Office (O-108) or online. To book an appointment, email savpacademic@nait.ca.

[Academic Integrity Liaison](#) - your primary source for anything related to Academic Misconduct. They can provide you with guidance, resources, and support regarding NAIT's Academic Integrity Policy and Academic Misconduct Procedure. To contact them, email academicintegrity@nait.ca.

Mental health support:

[NAITSA Peer Support](#) - free, anonymous, and confidential support listening service for students, by students. It is available online via LiveChat or on a walk-in basis in J209B on NAIT Main Campus.

[MyWellness](#) - free for all NAIT students and their family members, and it provides immediate support and resources for those experiencing mental health issues through a free mental health assessment, video counselling (paid service), and tools to help maintain a productive and positive lifestyle while completing their studies.

[NAIT Counselling](#) - free and confidential help for all students from registered and experienced counsellors, psychologists, a social worker, and a well-being nurse, that can support you with anxiety, depression, stress, relationships, adjusting to student life, meeting academic demands, grief and loss, personal or sexual identity, etc. Available for virtual and in-person appointments at all NAIT campuses.

Academic support:

[Learning Advisors](#) - advisors can meet with students to discuss any barrier to learning, such as staying on top of studies, achieving higher grades, overcoming barriers in the learning environment, and accessing disability services when applicable. Available for virtual and in-person (NAIT Main Campus) appointments.

[Learning Strategists](#) - strategists can help students develop skills to improve memory and learning, focus and concentration, exam preparation and writing, general study techniques, and more. Available for appointments in person at NAIT Main Campus and virtually.