

## Complaints

Complaints can be made individually or as a group. It is always best to try and resolve issues first via your course rep or a relevant staff member; however, if this is not possible we can support you through the University complaints procedure.

### 1. Informal Complaint Procedure

Speak to your supervisor, Head of Department or a relevant member of staff first to try and resolve the situation informally.

### 2. Formal Complaint Procedure

If you are unable to resolve the matter informally, you can submit a formal complaint and evidence to the University via the online complaints form.

### 3. Review Stage

If you have new evidence that you were unable to provide (with 'good reason') during Stage 2, or if you have evidence that Stage 2 of this procedure was not properly followed, your complaint can be reviewed.

### 4. Taking it to the OIA

If your complaint is still not successfully resolved, or you receive a Completion of Procedures (COP) letter at any stage of the procedure, you can take the complaint to the Office of Independent Adjudicators. They are an impartial, independent body set up to review student complaints about higher education providers in England and Wales.

You won't get in trouble with the University for submitting a complaint

## What is the GSA Advice Service?

The GSA Advice Service is part of the Graduate Students' Association and offers guidance on academic procedures, wellbeing support and welfare issues to postgraduate students at the University of York. We are **independent** from the University and our advice is free, **impartial** and **confidential**.

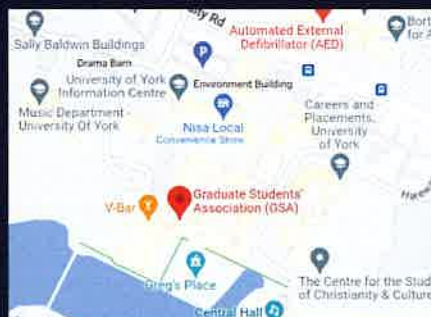
We have put together this comprehensive guide to help you with the terminology and timelines for the University's different procedures. For more in depth information, please see our website - [www.yorkgsa.org/welfare](http://www.yorkgsa.org/welfare)

If you have more questions or queries, you can easily book a telephone, face-to-face or online appointment by emailing [advice@yorkgsa.org](mailto:advice@yorkgsa.org)

We also run drop-ins on Wednesdays between 11am-3pm - come along!

### Where to find us

Room 120, First floor, Vanbrugh College



(We can also advise on non-academic misconduct, supervisor issues, wellbeing, Industrial Action and Leave of Absences)

## GSA ADVICE AND WELFARE

A Quick Guide To:

Academic Misconduct  
Exceptional Circumstances  
Academic Appeals  
Complaints





## Academic Misconduct

### Plagiarism

The presentation of another person's words or ideas as your own, often through failing to properly acknowledge a source using referencing and quotation marks.

### Collusion

The process whereby two or more students work - without official approval - and share ideas, solutions or material in work submitted for assessment.

### Fabrication

To seek to gain advantage by incorporating falsified or fabricated material / data in work submitted for assessment or publication.

### Commissioning

Paying someone else to do the work for you, or using AI generated content in your assignments.

### I have been suspected of Academic Misconduct, what happens next?

If it is decided that there is an Academic Misconduct case to answer, the Standing Academic Misconduct Panel (StAMP) will be in contact.

You will have 7 days to respond to the StAMP's investigation by either writing a statement to the panel, or attending a meeting with them. We can help you prepare a statement, or if you choose to attend a meeting in person, a GSA Adviser can accompany you for support.

## Exceptional Circumstances Affecting Assessment (PGR - please contact us)

If you experience unforeseen circumstances which impact an assessment, you should submit an Exceptional Circumstances claim. You can find the form online and will need to submit it before an assessment deadline or within 7 days of the deadline. If you submit after the deadline, you will need to explain why.

### What counts as 'Exceptional Circumstances'?

Some examples are, but not exhaustive to:

- Exceptional Medical Circumstances.
- Close bereavement.
- Being a victim of a serious crime.
- Lack of access to the internet or suitable resources e.g. a laptop required to complete assessments.
- Unexpectedly challenging circumstances in your domestic situation that could not have reasonably been anticipated or prevented.
- Exceptional Personal Circumstances.

### Is the Exceptional Circumstances process the most appropriate option for you?

If you are experiencing circumstances that are likely to continue affecting your ability to study for an extended period of time, taking a short break from study or 'Leave of Absence' may be more appropriate. You should speak to your supervisor if considering this option.

## Academic Appeals (PGT & PGR)



To appeal a grade, classification or mark, you must submit the appropriate online form within 28 days of receiving a notification from the Board of Examiners. Once your marks are ratified, you can appeal on the following grounds:

### Exceptional Circumstances

When circumstances affecting study could not have not been reasonably raised and/or could not have been evidenced at the time they occurred.

### Procedural Irregularity

Where the department or University has failed to follow its own policies and procedures, which subsequently has affected your academic studies or performance, or that the assessment was conducted unfairly or improperly.

### Strike Action

Where a procedural irregularity occurred in relation to the handling of UCU strike action, and where this directly affected your ability to study or academic performance.

Appeals go through a Formal Stage process first and if your appeal is unsuccessful, in some circumstances, you may be able to escalate to a Review Stage. You cannot appeal on the basis of Academic Judgement.

Disagreeing with the marker's academic interpretation of the quality of an assessment, for example, is not a basis for submitting an appeal.

- PGT - Postgraduate Taught
- PGR - Postgraduate Research

