

Online Student Conduct and Discipline Procedures

Introduction

- 1.1 The University of Liverpool's [Student Conduct Policy](#) sets out the standards of conduct required of our students and the University's approach to dealing with alleged student misconduct.
- 1.2 The procedures detailed here apply to any University of Liverpool student studying an online programme with Kaplan Open Learning (KOL) and should be read in conjunction with the [Student Conduct Policy](#).

Standards of student conduct

- 2.1 University of Liverpool online students are required to behave as responsible members of the online learning community, and to represent and uphold the good name of the University and KOL, allowing all students and staff to study and work in a safe environment.
- 2.2 A substantive, but not exhaustive list of behaviours and actions which the University and KOL regard as misconduct can be found in Section 7 of the [University of Liverpool Student Conduct Policy](#).
- 2.3 All students are required to sign the University of Liverpool and Kaplan Open Learning Terms and Conditions upon enrolment.
- 2.4 Section 3 of the Student Conduct Policy explains the scope of the policy in relation to its application, student conduct outside of the learning environment, decision-making on the balance of probabilities and consideration of suitable reasonable adjustments.



- 2.5 Procedures do not apply to allegations of academic misconduct including Plagiarism, Collusion, Contract Cheating, Cheating in Examinations and Formal Assessments including Class Tests, Falsifying data, breach of Research or Ethics apart from in exceptional circumstances, for instance where the seriousness of the allegations warrants action under the Policy.

How to report concerns about a student's conduct

- 3.1 Students who wish to raise a concern under this procedure can:
- i. Raise their concern with their Student Support Team or KOL Programme Director via email.
 - ii. Complete the Online Student Conduct Concerns Reporting Form. This will be received by the Student Conduct Officer. Concerns can be reported either with the reporting parties' contact details or anonymously. Please note that anonymous allegations cannot normally be investigated but do allow us to identify trends or patterns in specific areas of the University.
 - iii. Contact the Student Conduct Officer via email at studentconduct@study-online.liverpool.ac.uk.
- 3.2 Staff or honorary lecturers who wish to raise a concern about a student's behaviour should speak to the relevant Programme Director or contact the Student Conduct Officer via email at studentconduct@study-online.liverpool.ac.uk.

Support Available

- 4.1 Students who are concerned about the behaviour of another student can access support whether or not they wish their concerns to be investigated through this Policy. Students can seek support from the Student Support Team by emailing studentsupport@study-online.liverpool.ac.uk or calling +44 (0)151 318 4353.
- 4.2 The Student Support Team can provide support for students who have been impacted by the conduct of another student. This includes personal support and where appropriate, and with student consent, liaison with the academic



department if the reporting student's studies have been affected. Students who report a serious breach of the Student Conduct Policy will be provided with details of a named contact in the Student Support Team.

- 4.3 The Student Support Team can provide support for students who have had an allegation made against them, including personal support. Students who have an allegation against them will be provided with details of a named contact in the Student Support Team.
- 4.4 The Guild Advice Centre can provide independent, non-judgemental and confidential advice about any matter in this Policy and Procedure. They can support reporting and responding students at meetings throughout the process and can be contacted at guildadvice@liv.ac.uk
- 4.5 The University's duty of care extends to both the reporting and the responding students. Kaplan Open Learning will ensure that both parties are not represented or supported by the same member of staff to avoid conflict of interest.
- 4.6 The names of the reporting student(s) and responding student(s) may be provided to both the Guild of Students Advice Service and the Student Support Team by the Student Conduct Officer in order that they might pro-actively contact the student(s) to offer support.
- 4.7 Students are encouraged, where appropriate, to seek support from relevant external sources (e.g. local GPs or mental health services) as well as from sources internal to the University (e.g. the Student Support Team or the Disability Officer).
- 4.8 Employees of the University or Kaplan Open Learning can access support from their Line Manager, local management or their HR Business Partner. The relevant Employee Assistance Scheme/Programme is also available 24 hours a day and includes a helpline and provision of free and confidential counselling.

What we will do when a concern is raised through this procedure

- 5.1 Where a concern is raised with a Student Support Adviser, Programme Director or the Student Conduct Officer, this should first be considered alongside the University of Liverpool [Student Conduct Policy](#) and [Appendix B: Student Conduct Breaches and Indicative Sanctions](#), and advice on how to proceed can be sought from the University Student Conduct Team to determine if the case should be considered under the Procedure for Local Disciplinary Action.
- 5.2 Such action is designed to allow minor incidents to be dealt with quickly, to prevent further breaches, and sustain appropriate standards of conduct and behaviour, and such incidents are likely to be those classified as Category 1 breaches in Appendix B: Student Conduct Breaches and Indicative Sanctions.
- 5.3 Where it is deemed that the case does not warrant Local Disciplinary Action, the following KOL staff have the authority to act under the policy relating to Informal Resolution, as detailed in Section 2 of [Appendix A: Student Conduct Procedures](#):
 - i. Programme Director(s)
 - ii. Deputy Academic Director
 - iii. Head of Student Services
- 5.4 There is no right of appeal against sanctions given within informal resolution, although a responding student could, if they wished the matter to be considered further, request that the matter is reviewed using the Procedures for Local Disciplinary Action.
- 5.5 Where it is determined that the case warrants consideration under the procedure for Local Disciplinary Action as per Section 10 of the University of Liverpool Student Conduct Policy, this will be investigated by KOL's Student Conduct Officer (or nominee).



- 5.6 Allegations of serious misconduct i.e. allegations that cannot be dealt with under the Procedure for Local Disciplinary Action will be referred to the University of Liverpool by the Student Conduct Officer for consideration under Section 11 of the University of Liverpool Student Conduct Policy.

Procedure for Local Disciplinary Action

- 6.1 Local Disciplinary Action is likely to be suitable only for breaches listed as Category 1 in Appendix B of the Student Conduct Policy: Student Conduct Breaches and Indicative Sanctions. Such cases will be investigated by the KOL Student Conduct Officer or their nominee.
- 6.2 The Student Conduct Officer will follow the procedure for handling such alleged breaches of the University of Liverpool Student Conduct Policy as detailed in Appendix A: Student Conduct Procedures, Sections 3.1–3.15. In addition, they will:
- i. Consider any reasonable adjustments required by any party that will allow them to fully engage with the investigative procedures.
 - ii. Advise that a member of the Quality and Enhancement Team will attend any investigation meetings held with the reporting and responding students to act as note-taker.
 - iii. Draw attention to the University of Liverpool Student Conduct Policy and the procedure for handling alleged breaches of the Policy as detailed in Appendix A: Student Conduct Procedures, Section 3.
 - iv. Pending the outcome of an investigation, when in the opinion of the Student Conduct Officer it is necessary for the protection of any person, the reputation of the University of Liverpool or Kaplan Open Learning or the student themselves, the Student Conduct Officer may impose on any student a requirement that the student has no contact or restricted contact, with a specified person or persons. Failing to comply with such a requirement, without good reason, could lead to a further breach of the University of Liverpool Student Conduct Policy being considered.
 - v. If the case is proven or the responding student admits to the allegation of misconduct, the Student Conduct Officer will impose a sanction or sanctions determined by reference to Appendix B: Student Conduct

Breaches and Indicative Sanctions, and taking into consideration the facts of the case, precedent in similar previous cases, any aggravating and mitigating factors, and the student's conduct history.

- 6.3 In circumstances where an investigation is carried out under the University Disciplinary Procedures but upon conclusion, the Investigating Officer makes a recommendation for Local Disciplinary Action instead of referral to a University Disciplinary Hearing, a copy of the investigation report and evidence base will be sent to the KOL Student Conduct Officer, who will then follow the procedure detailed in Sections 3.16 -3.19.

Local Disciplinary Action – Right of Appeal

- 7.1 Any appeal against a decision or sanction made following Local Disciplinary Action will be considered under the University of Liverpool Student Conduct Policy Appendix A: Student Conduct Procedures, Section 4, with the following additions specific to online students:
- i. An appeal against a decision of the Student Conduct Officer should be submitted as per the instructions provided in the Outcome Letter. This should be emailed to appealsandcomplaints@study-online.liverpool.ac.uk within ten working days of receipt of the Outcome Letter.
 - ii. The student's appeal will be considered by KOL's Director of Student Services (or nominee).
 - iii. The Director of Student Services will consider the statement provided by the student as part of the review, alongside any additional information that is provided. Where the appeal is based on procedural irregularities, he/she may request from the Student Conduct Officer a summary of the case and rationale for the decision taken to support this review.
 - iv. An Outcome Letter will be provided to the student by the Quality and Enhancement Team. The decision of the Director of Student Services will be final and students will have no further right of appeal. The Completion of Procedures information will be provided within the Outcome Letter.

- v. All review documentation and the outcome letter will be stored centrally by the Quality and Enhancement team and submitted to the Student Conduct Team in order that a central record of disciplinary action against the student can be retained.

University Disciplinary Procedure

- 8.1 Misconduct dealt with by a University Disciplinary Panel is usually defined as serious misconduct, or persistent incidents of misconduct that have originally been dealt with via Local Disciplinary Action. The University Disciplinary Procedures are detailed in the Student Conduct Policy, Appendix A: Student Conduct Procedures, Sections 6-16.
- 8.2 In the first instance, all allegations of misconduct against a student studying an University of Liverpool Online Programme will be reviewed by the KOL Student Conduct Officer, and if, following discussion with the University Student Conduct Team, it is determined that the case is of a more serious nature, or where there has previously been a series of minor offences dealt with via Local Disciplinary Action, or where there is or has been police involvement, the Student Conduct Officer will refer the case to the University Student Conduct Team.
- 8.3 To determine the suitability of a case being presented to a University Disciplinary Panel, an Investigating Officer appointed by the University will investigate following the procedure laid out in Section 7-8 of Appendix A: Student Conduct Procedures. On conclusion of their investigation, they will make a recommendation to the Student Conduct Manager, or their nominee, as follows:
 - i. Where there is no case to answer, no further action should be taken but a note of the investigation should be kept on the responding student's record until they graduate in case of complaint of further allegation(s).



- ii. Where there is evidence to support a breach of the Student Conduct Policy has likely occurred but that the potential breach is not sufficiently serious to be referred to the University Disciplinary Panel and can be dealt with under Local Disciplinary Action, the Student Conduct Manager will write to the KOL Student Conduct Officer requesting they take Local Disciplinary Action.
 - iii. Where there is evidence to suggest a breach of the Student Conduct Policy has likely occurred, and the potential breach is of a serious nature such that it should be referred to the University Disciplinary Panel, the Student Conduct Manager will notify the responding student in writing.
- 8.4 Sections 9–15 of Appendix A: Student Conduct Procedures, explain the arrangements that will be made for the University Disciplinary Panel, the student’s right to representation, the use of witnesses, expectations around attendance at the hearing, and the procedures followed within the hearing itself should the student admit or deny the allegations.
- 8.5 Following the hearing and approval of the minutes by the Chair, the responding student and the reporting party will be notified in writing of the outcome of the hearing and of their right to appeal.
- 8.6 A copy of the letter to the responding student shall also be sent to KOL’s Student Conduct Officer and Quality and Enhancement Team.
- 8.7 The outcome letter will be sent by email only to the student’s University email address. It can also be copied to an alternative email address at the request of the student.
- 8.8 Should the student request a Completion of Procedures letter, where appropriate to do so, this will be provided by the Advisor to the University Disciplinary Panel.
- 8.9 All decisions of the University Disciplinary Panel shall be reported to the Senate and the Council annually on an anonymised basis.

University Disciplinary Right of Appeal

- 9.1 Any appeal against a decision or sanction of the University Disciplinary Panel will be considered using the procedures documented in the University of Liverpool Student Conduct Policy: Appendix A, Student Conduct Procedures, Sections 17-22.

Conferral of Degrees

- 10.1 Except with the special permission of the University of Liverpool, no degree of the University of Liverpool will be conferred upon, or certificate or diploma granted to a person who is subject to on-going action in accordance with these procedures, including the hearing of any appeal under the procedures or outstanding criminal investigations or proceedings as per section 3.1.2 of the Student Conduct Policy.

Confidentiality

- 11.1 Throughout the operation of these procedures, we will seek to ensure that confidentiality is maintained. This approach will not prevent us from disclosing information where necessary for the discharge of duties or as required by law, nor will it prevent us, where appropriate, from disclosing information about any outcome under this procedure.
- 11.2 Records relating to conduct offences will be held by the KOL Quality and Enhancement Team against the student file and in a secure location on a central database. A record will also be kept on a central database by the University's Student Conduct Team.
- 11.3 Records will be retained on record for six years after a student has left the University and in accordance with our data retention schedule. Any sanction given will not usually be disclosed to a requesting third party but the University reserves the right to do so when considered appropriate, for example, where

there may be safeguarding concerns. More information can be found within section 15.3 of the Student Conduct Policy.

Responsible Manager	Title
Katy Bailey	Director of Student Services
Rob Jackson	Head of Student Services
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Related Policies and Procedures	University of Liverpool Student Conduct Policy University of Liverpool Online Students Complaint Procedure