

Misconduct process impact on student course progression

Delays in Monash University's processing academic misconduct allegations, some of which take several months to resolve, often leads to serious course progression issues for affected students.

This results in severe time, financial, and mental health impacts that are not clearly accounted for in the existing penalty decisions and misconduct process.

The below are some preliminary recommendations on how existing procedures can be amended.

Case Example*

Date	Event
12 November	Student submits final assessment for marking
4 December	Results Released, student receives WH due to pending investigation
8 December	Chief Examiner provides the student with a notice of suspected breach of academic integrity, the student is invited to respond within 5 working days
11 December	Chief Examiner receives student response
23 December	University Shutdown
2 January	University Reopens
27 January	Chief Examiner notifies student of intent to escalate the matter to Student Conduct and Complaints
14 March	Last day to add Semester 1 units
20 March	Student receives notice of allegation of academic misconduct, and is invited to respond within 5 working days
26 March	Student responds to notice of allegation

31 March	Census Date
13 April	Student receives notice of decision with a guilty finding and penalty of 0 for the assessment. Student may fail the unit as a result and has 20 working days to lodge an appeal.
3 May	The student lodges an appeal against the finding of guilt and the penalty.
17 May	The student's appeal is accepted and a hearing date is confirmed.
2 June	The student attends an appeal panel hearing. The finding of guilt is overturned and the penalty is cancelled.

The consequences of these delays are exacerbated for cases that occur in Semester 1 due there being only two weeks between results release and the start of the Semester 2 teaching period.

*Please note that the example above is not based on a specific case or dates, but an indication of the type of situations that can emerge from the current process.

Impact Assessment

While the above is an example only, it illustrates the time consuming nature of the process even in cases where the student is found not guilty. Where a misconduct finding is pending or an appeal is in progress, a unit's result is not finalised and marked as WH. This means the student cannot re-enrol in the unit or enrol in any subsequent units that rely on the original unit as a prerequisite.

In this example, the student would have missed both the last day to enrol and the census date in Semester 1 units. Even where they are ultimately found not guilty of misconduct, the student may face a six month delay in their course progression due being unable to enrol in critical units in Semester 1. Anticipation of such delays has led to cases of students choosing to discontinue from Monash and enrol at other Universities to complete their degree.

Impact: Severe

Areas impacted:

Student

- Financial:
 - \$15,000 - \$22,500 across six months of living costs (Source: [Monash](#))
 - \$2,000 - \$3,000 in visa extension costs, with additional costs per family member such as children (Source: [DHA](#))
 - Some students have reported that they cannot secure the next part of their study loan from their bank or sponsor, due to being unable to provide a transcript that shows passing grades. This can lead to delays in paying fees, putting the student at risk of account [encumbrance](#).
- Time: Six months or longer due to having to repeat units or wait until the result for the prerequisite unit is finalised before being able to enrol in subsequent units.
- Social: Loss of employment opportunities, disappointment, shame and judgement from friends and family.
- Mental Health: prolonged anxiety, stress, and uncertainty; can exacerbate existing conditions such as anxiety and depression.

University

- Loss of reputation and student trust.
- Loss of student enrolments where students elect to withdraw from their course and complete their studies elsewhere.
- Loss of revenue from student discontinuations, at approximately \$20,000 per semester.

Recommendations

Below are some options and recommendations on how existing procedures can be amended where resources and procedural fairness requirements do not allow faster processing of cases. Amendments may take the form of procedural changes, and may necessitate updates to be made to University enrolment management systems.

1. Permit affected students to re-enrol in units that are not marked as 'completed'

Students anticipating a guilty finding and a penalty that will lead to a fail grade may need to re-enrol in the unit. In this situation, delays in the outcome will prevent the student from repeating the unit in the subsequent semester as the current system and processes do not allow re-enrolling in a unit that has 'not completed'.

Amend section 3 of the Coursework Enrolment Procedure, example wording:

- Students may enrol in a unit they have been previously enrolled in, but is not marked as complete due to a pending Academic Misconduct Investigation.
- Where special permission is granted under this section, the student accepts that, if, at the conclusion of the academic misconduct investigation, the student *receives a passing grade* for their earlier attempt:
 - Where the outcome is received before census date: they will be unenrolled from the unit; or
 - Where the outcome is received after census date: they will be unenrolled from the unit, and will be automatically assessed for a remittance of debt through the Special Circumstances process.

2. Permit affected students to re-enrol in units after the last day to enrol, especially for units they have already attempted

Alternatively, students who receive a misconduct outcome after the last day to enrol in a unit may be given special permission to enrol in units after the WH grade is finalised. Where a student has failed a unit at the conclusion of the process, they will need to repeat the unit.

Amend section 5 of the Coursework Enrolment Procedure, example wording:

- 5.2.4 Students wishing to add units after the last date available for the teaching period, must seek approval from their managing faculty, or school in Malaysia.
- Approval is at the discretion of the managing faculty and will not be granted if the late enrolment is likely to disadvantage the student academically.
- *Approval will be granted where the student has:*
 - *attempted the unit at least once previously; and*

- *was unable to enrol before the last day to enrol due to a pending investigation of Academic Misconduct, and*
- *the application is not so late that the student is unlikely to pass the unit due to missed assessment deadlines.*

3. Permit students to enrol in units where the grade for the prerequisite unit is pending due to a misconduct investigation

In some cases, students expecting a dismissal, or only has a minorly weighted assessment affected (e.g. 10%) that would not lead them to failing the unit if marks were lost, may anticipate passing the unit at the end of the process. However, if the unit affected is a prerequisite, they are unable to enrol in subsequent units until the outcome is received.

Amend section 3.3-3.5 of the Coursework Enrolment Procedure, example wording:

- Where a student does not have a finalised grade for a prerequisite unit due to a pending academic misconduct investigation where no outcome has been reached, the prerequisite can be waived by a Chief Examiner. In making the decision, the Chief Examiner must consider the student's performance in other assessment tasks in the prerequisite unit, and any other factors relevant to the student's academic success.
- Where special permission is granted under this section, the student accepts that if, at the conclusion of the academic misconduct investigation, the student *receives a penalty for misconduct that would result in a failing grade*:
 - Where the outcome is received before census date: they will be unenrolled from the unit; or
 - Where the outcome is received after census date: they will be unenrolled from the unit, and will be automatically assessed for a remittance of debt through the Special Circumstances process.

MGA

August 2025