

Frequently Asked Questions about Misconduct

What is the Code of Student Conduct?

The [Code of Student Conduct](#) (the Code) is the policy under which cases of academic and non-academic misconduct are adjudicated by Mount Royal University.

What are my rights under the Code?

Generally, your rights include freedom from discrimination; freedom from harassment and sexual harassment; freedom of expression; the protection of academic integrity; supportive academic and administrative policies; and a transparent and consistent disciplinary process.

What are my obligations under the Code?

Students must adhere to the behavioural standards outlined in [the Code](#) and to make responsible decisions concerning their conduct that reflect Mount Royal's commitment to academic and personal integrity.

Will misconduct appear on my academic transcript?

This depends on the circumstances surrounding the misconduct. In very serious cases of academic or non-academic misconduct, a [Panel Hearing](#) may be convened. As a result, a notation of misconduct may be placed on your transcript for a prescribed time.

Won't it be my word against the complainant? Who will believe me?

The [Code of Student Conduct](#) ensures all Mount Royal students are treated consistently and objectively when facing allegations of misconduct. The Office of Student Conduct was created to protect the interests of students as well as faculty and staff, and to balance the rights of all.

When do I have the choice to take a situation to a hearing?

In most first incidents, students have the choice to take an incident to a hearing (depending on the severity of the incident). Any subsequent misconduct incident reports filed with the Office of Student Conduct will go directly to a hearing.

Is the hearing a formal court process?

No; it is meant to be an informal meeting. These meetings are not about proving guilt or innocence. Instead, what is being determined is what most likely happened, on a balance of probabilities, based on the information presented by all parties

How do I prepare for a hearing?

- Consider getting some self-advocacy coaching from the SAMRU [Student Advocacy Resource Coordinator](#) to help you prepare your narrative. Before the hearing, you will be given the opportunity to know what the case against you is and you will be able to respond to the allegations at the hearing itself
- Get a good night's rest before the hearing. 8 hours per night is the standard requirement
- Leave your house/apartment early so that you can arrive at least 30 minutes before the hearing begins
- Eat a balanced breakfast
- Print a copy of your speaking notes to take with you

What happens in the actual hearing?

- The Chairperson will ask everyone at the table to introduce themselves
- The Chairperson will briefly explain what will take place in the hearing.
- The Complainant will be asked to present their version of events.
- Questions from the Respondent and Panel will follow.
- The Respondent will be asked to present their version of events.
- Questions from the Complainant and Panel will follow.
- Witnesses may be called and questions asked of them by the Complainant, the Respondent, or the Panel. Witnesses will be excused.
- If the Panel is satisfied that they have all of the information they need, the Complainant and Respondent will be excused.

What happens after the hearing?

- The Panel privately discusses all the information that has been presented to them, and collectively makes a decision based on a balance of probabilities.
- This decision is communicated in writing to the OSC within 5 business days [excluding the day of the hearing].
- The OSC, in turn, provides this information in writing to the Complainant and the Respondent.

Will I need a lawyer?

That's up to you. You have the choice of who to bring as an attendant. Sometimes students do bring different people to a hearing, like a lawyer, family member, friend, or the [Student Advocacy Resource Coordinator](#). Regardless of the role of the person you bring, that person is called a "meeting attendant" and cannot speak for you during the hearing. You are the advocate. There are exceptional instances where more than one attendant is allowed to attend your hearing. However, this is not necessary in every case. Please [consult the Office of Student Conduct](#) directly should you wish to bring more than one attendant.

What option do I have on what I submit for the hearing panel members to view as part of my case/situation?

You have choices to make on what to submit which varies depending on the circumstances surrounding your allegation. All submissions must be given to the Office of Student Conduct 5 business days before your hearing. Submissions could include:

- A timeline of events
- A statement of the situation and any other relevant details to your case
- Any email correspondence between you and the instructor or person filing report (if applicable to allegation of misconduct)
- Your course outline, if relevant to classroom standards

What might my instructor submit to be viewed by hearing panel members?

- A detailed description of the incident
- The current incident report
- A description of the instructor/student meeting (if relevant)
- Any relevant email correspondence (if relevant)
- A copy of your assignment with highlighted sections of alleged plagiarism and a copy of the text it was allegedly taken from (if academic misconduct)
- *The Office of Student Conduct may include past incident reports, if any*

When do I see what is being submitted to the hearing board by the complainant?

This is typically referred to by the Office of Student Conduct as “the package.” You will obtain this three business days before the hearing. This is also the same time that panel members receive access and find out about many of the details of your case. We recommend sharing the “package” with us at the [Student Advocacy Resource Centre](#) because sometimes new information is learned at that time which the student may be questioned on in a hearing

How do I appeal the incident? (Disagreement with the incident itself)

You can take it to a hearing, where a panel will decide whether or not misconduct occurred. If so, they will determine what an appropriate sanction may be. If a hearing convenes and the panel finds that misconduct occurs, there is a separate appeal process for the sanction the panel awards. Please [contact the Office of Student Conduct](#) to learn more about this process.

Who is allowed to appeal the decision of the hearing?

Any party at a hearing can appeal the hearing decision (IE: student/Chair/Instructor-if they are the complainant or the respondent of a hearing), if they can demonstrate the appeal grounds which are:

- A procedural error that happened in the hearing
- Alleged bias of a board member
- Substantial new information not previously available to the hearing board

Will anyone know me at the hearing?

None of the panel members should know you during a hearing. Office of Student Conduct takes great care to make sure no one knows you when they are assembling the panel. If you do recognize one or more panel members, please speak to the Office of Student Conduct immediately.

Who else will attend the hearing?

- You and your chosen attendant(s)
- The complainant (person who submitted the initial report). Sometimes they also will bring an attendant(s)
- 5 panel members which is made up of a combination of faculty, staff, and students
- Someone from the Office of Student Conduct (as a procedural guide for panel members)

Can I bring a witness to my hearing?

No character witnesses are normally allowed. Witnesses are more common in non-academic instances. Academic allegations rarely have witnesses, but they may, if for example you’re dealing with an allegation of cheating during an exam and there were witnesses who saw aspects of the incident. It is the student’s responsibility to inform the Office of Student Conduct of any witnesses they wish to bring at least five business days before the hearing. Additionally, students are to ensure that their witnesses are informed of the time, date, and location of the hearing. However, witnesses may contact the Office of Student Conduct at any time for more information.

Who finds out about this hearing or incident? I don't want anyone in class to know or my future instructors.

The only people who will know about this situation include:

- Any people you choose to share this information/experience with
- People involved in the hearing: panel members and staff from the Office of Student Conduct (who keep the hearing, your documents related to the hearing and your identity, confidential according to MRU's FOIP policy)
- The complainant (i.e. your Instructor, Security Services, etc.). If it is your Instructor, it is very likely that they have consulted with the Chair.
- There is the possibility of future instructors/student/others, if you face a future allegation

I'm really stressed about this hearing. What can I do?

Treat yourself with care. You are in control of how you treat yourself. Consider taking your mind off of the hearing by watching a funny show on Netflix, spending time with friends, family or a loved pet, taking a warm bath, or reading something for pleasure, instead of for school work. Need more self-care tips? Check out this link [here](#).

What happens if I simply don't attend the hearing?

It depends on why you're not attending the hearing. Generally, the hearing still goes ahead as planned, even without the student, unless there are extenuating circumstances which the student can demonstrate why they were absent (i.e. medical note). If this cannot be proved, you lose your right to speak to your situation in front of the panel committee

When will I find out about the hearing decision? How will I find out about the decision?

Within 5 business days after the hearing takes place, but sometimes sooner. When the "outcome package" is ready, the Office of Student Conduct will contact you and arrange a meeting to go over the outcome in person. For this meeting you are welcome to bring attendant(s)/support. You must pick up your physical package directly from the Office of Student Conduct. Hearing decisions are not shared with the Student Advocacy Resource Centre unless students share results with us directly. Please feel welcomed to come by and tell us about your outcome. We can answer any concerns/questions you may have and talk about next steps/options.

What can I do if there is a hold on my registration account related to the Office of Student Conduct?

What you do depends on the circumstances behind the hold. If you were required to complete a workshop as part of your sanction, you will need to provide the Office of Student Conduct with proof of completion for the hold to be removed. If you have completed the workshops and the hold remains, [contact the Office of Student Conduct](#) to clear up the potential misunderstanding

Source: <https://www.mtroyal.ca/CampusServices/CampusResources/StudentConduct/index.htm>