

SPSO decision report

Case: 201305935, The Robert Gordon University
Sector: further and higher education
Subject: plagiarism and intellectual property
Outcome: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Miss C complained to us on behalf of a student (Miss A) who had been found guilty of collusion at an academic misconduct hearing. Miss A had appealed on the grounds that the university had not followed procedures in conducting the hearing. They had also terminated Miss A's enrolment as this was the second time a misconduct charge had been proven, which was their automatic penalty for this. Miss A said this penalty was unfair. When Miss A appealed, the university determined there were no grounds to consider the appeal. Miss C complained to us that the university did not follow their procedures in dealing with the misconduct complaint and that they unreasonably dismissed Miss A's appeal.

We looked in detail at the way in which the university considered the misconduct allegation and asked for more information about what happened, and about the procedures involved. Our investigation found that the university had followed their policy and procedures in dealing with the alleged misconduct and the subsequent appeal. Although there were some minor issues about the accuracy of the record of the misconduct hearing, these did not materially affect how the university handled it. We noted that they had already taken steps to address these, so we made no recommendations.