Plagiarism and other Academic Misconduct:
If you have been accused of plagiarism or other academic misconduct e.g. cheating in an exam, you will be invited to meet with the relevant Chief Examiner and one other member of the University staff. You are entitled to be accompanied at these meetings and this can be a representative from your Students' Union. It is important to attend the University can make their decision and impose penalties even if you don't attend and the outcome could affect your progress at University. It is normal to be nervous, scared even, but we can guide and support you through these proceedings and be there to talk about it afterwards if you need. Just call, email or drop in to our office if you need support.

If you and a fellow student are accused jointly we can provide you each with independent, confidential support.

Progress Reviews and Disciplinary Hearings
There are many reasons why students may be asked to attend formal meetings: to review their academic progress or for disciplinary issues—or in the case of social work, teaching or nursing students to review professional progress or fitness to practice. Whatever the circumstances, these meetings are the opportunity for the University to state their concerns and—most importantly—for you to be heard and give your side of the story for consideration. We can offer support at these meetings and also help you to prepare for them and present your case with the aim of making the process easier and to achieve the best possible outcome for you.

Complaints
If you are dissatisfied with something that the University is responsible for—e.g. something relating to your course, residential services, how you have been treated by a member of staff or another student, not receiving a service you should be receiving or the quality or availability of resources—whatever it is you can complain or ask for it to be resolved.

However, many students either don't know who to complain to or how to complain or they worry about 'making trouble'. It may even be that you would like to complain anonymously but still know what happens to your complaint.

You can discuss your complaint with your Union in total confidence and without obligation to pursue it further. We will always aim to help you resolve things informally if possible before resorting to the University's formal Complaints procedures. We will help you to identify the right person or department to take your complaint to or—if you prefer and if possible—we can take your complaint forward anonymously and let you know the outcome.

Where the informal approach has not worked or, in the case of more serious issues where it might not be appropriate, we will support and guide you through the Complaints process, helping you to put your complaint in writing if needed.

Contact Us
email: theunion@stir.ac.uk
phone: 01786 467166
or drop in to see us at the Robbins Centre,
The University of Stirling,
FK9 4LA
Important things to know if something goes wrong...

**Extenuating Circumstances**
Sometimes things happen that can affect your studies. You may be unwell and unable to meet an assignment deadline or sit an exam, or personal or practical issues may be affecting your studies.

Some examples of what the University may consider:
- Bereavement
- Ill health—including mental ill health
- Personal or practical issues that are impacting on your studies e.g. financial difficulties, relationship problems

**Pre is better than post**
As soon as you are aware that something is affecting your studies—especially if it’s affecting your attendance, assessments or exams—letting the University know gives them the opportunity to consider your circumstances, support you and make alternative arrangements. If you leave it until after a poor grade or fail, it can be much harder to argue your case for extenuating circumstances.

Don’t worry though, we can help you to prepare an extenuating circumstances statement and look at what evidence you might need to support it — whether you are alerting them before assessment or as grounds for an Appeal.

**Leave of absence**
If you really feel that you can’t continue your studies because of your circumstances, you may consider requesting a leave of absence.

A leave of absence allows you to take a break from your studies and return to them later i.e. when your situation is improved. We can help you identify your options and help you write and submit a Leave of Absence request.

**Academic Appeals**
It can be really hard if you fail an exam, other assessment or module, especially if you think you should have passed. In some circumstances, you can appeal and ask for your case to be reviewed. The University has rules about appeals, which can be found on their website—e.g. the time you must appeal in, the grounds that are considered eligible. Sometimes it can be hard to decide whether you have grounds for appeal or how to write about what affected you. Your Union can help you
- identify if you have potential grounds for appeal
- Prepare your appeal and identify what supporting evidence you might need
- With stage 2 appeals (appealing the decision of an appeal). This can include attending any meetings or panels with you and helping you to present your case

**When you can’t appeal or your appeal fails**
For some students, failing may be down to poor planning or just not studying enough. If this is the case you can learn from your mistakes and improve your planning, studying or essay writing skills with support from University’s Student Learning Support Service

If you are unable to progress with your studies or a lower degree award means you may have to change your future plans, then speaking to staff at the University’s Career Development Centre may help you identify your options.