

Breaches of Assessment Rules and Investigation Procedures Policy

1. Purpose

This policy outlines the procedures for managing alleged breaches of VCAA examination rules and school-based assessment authentication rules. It ensures that all processes are conducted fairly, transparently, and in accordance with VCAA requirements.

The school is committed to:

- Upholding the integrity of assessment processes
- Ensuring procedural fairness in all investigations
- Providing students with the opportunity to respond to allegations
- Maintaining confidentiality throughout all proceedings

2. Scope

This policy applies to all students undertaking school-based assessment, including those enrolled in VCE, VCE VM and VPC Units 1–4, and all staff involved in assessment, supervision, and administration.

3. Student Responsibilities

Students must:

- Comply with all VCAA examination rules (see Appendix I) and school rules during assessments (see Appendix II).
- Ensure all submitted work is their own and properly authenticated
- Follow instructions provided by teachers regarding assessment conditions

4. Reporting Alleged Breaches

Allegations may be made by any person with information that suggests rules have been breached, for example, a teacher, a student, a parent or guardian, or an external party such as a tutor.

Reports must be directed to the VCE, VCEVM or VPC coordinator (henceforth ‘coordinator’). Allegations may be made at any point during the academic year.

Any work under investigation will not be assessed until the process is complete. The original of the final version of the work is to be retained by the school. The student should be given a copy of the work.

Any work that has already been assessed may have the final result or score changed once the investigation is complete.

5. Preliminary Investigation

The purpose of a preliminary investigation is to determine if the allegation has substance and warrants an investigation. The coordinator will conduct the preliminary investigation upon receipt of an allegation.

This investigation should take place within two school days of receiving an allegation.

Outcome

If the preliminary investigation finds the allegation does not have substance, the student's work can be assessed as normal, and no further action is required.

If the preliminary investigation finds that the allegation does have substance, then the student and parent/guardian must be notified directly that a formal investigation is required. A written notification must also be sent to the student's Kurnai email address.

This notification must include:

- A brief outline of the allegations
- A copy of the formal investigation process (see Appendix II)
- An expected completion date for the investigation

Record-keeping

Detailed records of the preliminary investigation will be kept and recorded as a Compass entry under the "academic" field. This includes the outcome, any relevant documentation and a copy of the communication to the student.

6. Formal Investigation

The purpose of the investigation is to determine whether there is any substance to an allegation that a student has breached VCAA examination rules or VCAA authentication rules for school-based assessment, including the rules for authentication of student work. The results of the formal investigation will be used to determine if a hearing is necessary (see next section).

The formal investigation should take place within three school days of the preliminary investigation.

The investigator

The investigation will be conducted by the coordinator. Alternatively, if the coordinator is making the allegations or giving evidence, then the Campus Principal will nominate another member of the campus leadership team to conduct the investigation, who is not a decision-maker.

The investigator must approach the investigation with an open mind, act fairly and without bias.

Relevant evidence

The investigator must consider the allegation against the student, the evidence of anyone who might have something relevant to say about the allegation, and any documents or information that may shed light on whether an allegation has substance.

Relevant evidence can include:

- any instructions given to students by the teacher about the conditions under which the school-based assessment was to be undertaken (including the VCAA examination rules)
- the student's work
- copies of specific notes or another student's work or any other evidence of copying or cheating, such as unacknowledged source material if such an allegation relates to the use of unauthorised notes or cheating or copying from other students
- samples of other work by the student for comparison, if relevant
- the teacher's record of authentication
- the teacher's opinion about the student's work
- accurate notes of conversations with witnesses, the teacher and the student.

Some or all the information and evidence gathered during the investigation may show that the allegation against the student is unfounded; this evidence should not be discounted.

Student opportunity to respond:

After the investigator has gathered evidence, the student must be invited to an opportunity to respond. The student and parent/guardian must be notified directly of the invitation to respond. A written notice to respond must also be sent to the student's Kurnai email address.

This invitation must be in writing via the student's Kurnai email address. This invitation must include:

- A summary of the allegations against the student
- An invitation to attend an interview to respond to the allegations. The invitation must include the time, date and location of the interview. The interview must be set for a minimum of two school days after the invitation, to allow the student to prepare.
- Inform the student that they may bring a support person to provide moral support, such as a parent, a school staff member not related to the allegations, a guardian or a peer. The support person is there to provide moral support, rather than to represent the student or to speak on their behalf.
- Inform the student that if they elect to not attend the interview, then they can respond in writing to any allegation against them. A written response must be submitted by the same date as the interview.
- Inform the student of any particular information that may be requested during the interview.

If the allegations suggest that the student has submitted work that is not their own, then the student may be asked to provide evidence that demonstrates that the work submitted is their own or was completed in accordance with VCAA requirements or both. The student may also be asked to:

- provide evidence of the development of the work
- discuss the content of the work with the teacher and answer questions to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the work
- provide samples of their other work
- complete, under supervision, a supplementary assessment task related to the original task.

Parent/guardian notification

The parent/guardian should be informed of the nature of the allegation and copied into the “invitation to respond.”

Record keeping

The coordinator must summarise their findings and attach any relevant evidence as a Compass entry (using the “academic” field). This includes any evidence that suggests the allegations are not proven, as well as any responses the student provided during the investigation.

A copy of the invitation to respond and the parent/guardian notification should also be attached to the Compass entry.

7. Hearing

The purpose of the decision-making stage is to determine if the student has breached VCAA examination rules or VCAA authentication rules for school-based assessment.

The decision-maker

The decision-making will be conducted by the campus principal or another member of the principal team (the decision-maker)

The decision-maker will review the investigator’s findings and evidence; if the decision-maker forms an independent view that the evidence against the student is insufficient to establish the allegations against the student, the decision-maker should confirm this in writing to the student and advise that no further action will be taken.

If the decision-maker considers that there is sufficient evidence to justify a hearing to decide whether or not the allegations are proven, a meeting or hearing should be convened so that the evidence can be considered, and the student given an opportunity to be heard. The decision-maker should reserve their judgement until they have heard from the student at the hearing.

Arranging the hearing

The decision-maker must arrange the hearing and provide written notice of the hearing to the student via Kurnai email and Education Teams. The notice must be provided at least 24 hours before the hearing. The notice must include:

- the date, time, place and likely duration of the meeting or hearing
- the allegation(s) against the student

- the names of all decision-makers
- advice that the student may bring a support person, such as a parent or guardian
- the name of a contact person if the student has queries about the meeting or hearing
- the responsibility of the student to contact the contact person if they cannot attend the hearing due to illness or sudden emergency
- a copy of any evidence that the decision-makers will consider at the meeting or hearing, including whether any witnesses will be present at the meeting or hearing
- the possible outcomes, including penalties

Hearings are to be conducted onsite in the boardroom or a suitably private location. Hearings should occur within five school days of the investigation being concluded.

Conducting a hearing

The purpose of the hearing is to determine whether or not, on the balance of probabilities, that the allegations against the student have been proven.

When conducting the hearing, the decision maker must

- act in a fair manner, without bias
- explain the purpose of the hearing to the student and confirm the allegation against the student and the possible outcomes
- give the student the opportunity to respond to the evidence presented and to ask questions of any witnesses present at the meeting or hearing.
- consider all evidence and submissions carefully, including the student's response, and whether the allegation (and the student's defence) is supported by evidence that is relevant and credible
- consider all relevant factors and no irrelevant factors
- decide on the balance of probabilities whether the allegation(s) can be proven – The balance of probabilities means that it is more likely than not that the allegations are true. The allegation does not have to be proven beyond reasonable doubt.

Student's failure to attend a hearing

If a student cannot attend a hearing due to sudden illness or extreme emergency, then they must contact the contact person named in the notice, inform the contact person that they cannot attend, and reschedule the hearing with the contact person. This is the student's responsibility.

If the student does not contact the contact person and does not attend the hearing, then the decision can be made in absentia.

Penalties

The decision-maker must decide, in relation to any allegation(s) found to be proven, whether a penalty should be imposed, and, if so, what penalty is appropriate. Possible penalties could include:

- a verbal or written warning
- detention or suspension
- refusal to consider the student's work but an opportunity for the student to resubmit the work if there is sufficient time before the due date for submission of results according to the VCAA schedule
- refusal to accept the part of the student's work found to have been completed in contravention of VCAA rules and a subsequent determination of the appropriate result for the relevant outcome or module forming part of the VCE or VPC Unit.
- refusal to accept any part of the work, awarding an N for the outcome or module.

If the student's work was accepted for assessment and a breach of VCAA rules was discovered after the work had been assessed, the penalty should be applied and, if necessary, the student's records adjusted. For example, the original outcome or module result may change from an S to an N. If an N is awarded for an outcome or module, an N will be awarded for the unit concerned.

Similarly, the detected breach of VCAA rules may result in a score change. This score change should be communicated to the VCAA through the completion of the Score Amendment Sheet.

Informing the student and parent/guardian

The decision-maker must inform the student and the parent/guardian of the decision of the hearing via email, within five school days of the hearing. This should include:

- the reasons for the decision on each allegation, and the supporting evidence
- any penalty that will be imposed
- information about the student's right to appeal to the VCAA under section 2.5.21 of *the Education and Training Reform Act*, including that the appeal must be lodged with the VCAA no later than 14 days after the student receives written notice of the decision from the school.

Record keeping

A summary of the hearing and the decision needs to be completed on Compass (as an "Academic" entry). The decision-maker must attach all communications (including the notice of hearing and the informing of the decision) to this entry.

8. Student Appeal to VCAA

An appeal against a decision made as a result of a school hearing must be made in writing to the VCAA Chief Executive Officer (CEO) no later than 14 days after the student receives written notice of the decision from the school.

- Section 2.5.21 of the Education and Training Reform Act provides that a student may appeal to the VCAA against a decision by the school, and any penalty imposed by the school, in respect of a contravention of the VCAA assessment rules relating to school-based assessments.
- This right of appeal does not apply to decisions about the satisfactory completion of a course arising from a student's attendance, or other disciplinary decisions of a school not arising from a contravention of VCAA assessment rules.

On receipt of a notice of appeal from a student, the VCAA CEO must nominate an employee of the Secretary of the Victorian Department of Education to interview the parties to the appeal and attempt to resolve the matter.

Notice of school decision following the resolution process

Following the interviews conducted by the VCAA-nominated representative, the school must notify both the student and the VCAA, in writing and within 7 days, that it has either:

- rescinded its decision and any penalty imposed
- rescinded the penalty imposed
- reduced the penalty imposed
- confirmed both the decision and the penalty imposed.

Student appeal

If the school rescinds its decision and any penalty imposed in relation to the student, the student's appeal to the VCAA is taken to have been withdrawn.

The VCAA must ask the student to either withdraw the appeal or confirm that the appeal is to proceed if the school has:

- rescinded the penalty imposed
- reduced the penalty imposed
- confirmed both the decision and the penalty imposed.

Appeal hearing (rehearing)

If a student elects to proceed with an appeal, the VCAA CEO must refer the appeal to be heard and determined by a review committee. An appeal of this nature is conducted as a rehearing. This means that the review committee hears evidence from both the student and the school and makes its own decision on the evidence. It is not a review of the school's procedures and handling of the allegation(s) against the student.

If the review committee is satisfied on the balance of probabilities that the student has breached VCAA rules relating to school-based assessment, it may decide to:

- reprimand the student
- permit the student, if practicable, to resubmit the schoolwork required for either
- assessment in the study or the course
- satisfactory completion of the study or the course
- refuse to accept part of the work and request the school to assess the student on the remainder of the work submitted
- amend the student's school-based assessment results.

This decision must be conveyed to the student in writing.

Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed as part of the College's four year review cycle.

Policy last reviewed	May 2026
Approved by	College Principal
Next scheduled review date	May 2030

9. Appendixes

Appendix I: VCE written examinations and the General Achievement Test (GAT)

Reproduced from the VCAA website <https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/assessment/vce/examination-rules>

Students are required to observe the following rules for the conduct of VCE written examinations and the GAT conducted by or on behalf of the VCAA, as well as the day-to-day rules of their school and of the venue.

VCAA rules shall apply with appropriate and reasonable modifications to students who have disabilities or other impairments.

All supervisors are issued with directions for the administration of VCE written examinations and the GAT and are required to report all alleged breaches of these rules to the VCAA.

Supervisors have the right to check any authorised materials that are taken into a VCE written examinations and the GAT.

1. Students must not cheat or assist other students to cheat, including taking any action that gives or attempts to give them or another student an unfair advantage in a VCE external assessment.
2. Students must not allow, induce or assist any other person to present for a VCE external assessment in their place.
3. Students must not present for a VCE external assessment in another student's place.
4. Students must not present for a VCE external assessment under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
5. Students must obey and observe all instructions or directions given by their supervisor.
6. Students must provide reasonable assistance to any investigation by the VCAA in relation to a suspected breach of VCAA rules.
7. Students attending a VCE external assessment may bring only the materials and equipment approved for that external assessment into the examination room.
8. Students must not possess mobile phones and electronic devices that are capable of storing, receiving or transmitting information or electronic signals, such as recorded music and video players, organisers, dictionaries and computerised watches, during a VCE external assessment.
9. Students detected with any device defined in rule 8 must, upon the direction of a supervisor, surrender that device for inspection. Any confiscated device may be retained, pending any investigation into an alleged breach of VCAA rules. Students must provide reasonable assistance to the VCAA or its agents to enable the interrogation of the device.

10. Students must not bring into or possess in the examination room any drinks or food, except under special circumstances as approved and directed by the VCAA. Bottled water is permitted in the examination room under approved conditions.
11. Students must not communicate with any other student while the VCE external assessment is being conducted.
12. Students must not cause any nuisance, annoyance or interference to any other student during a VCE external assessment.
13. Students must not remove or tear out any part of a bound reference, answer book, question/task book or question and answer book except where permitted, for example, formula sheets.
14. Students must not remove any response material, used or unused, from the examination room.
15. Students must not begin to write or mark their paper or response material in any way, or use a calculator, until advised by a supervisor that writing may commence.
16. Students must raise their hand if they wish to communicate with a supervisor.
17. Students must not leave their place until permitted by a supervisor.
18. Students will not be permitted to leave the VCE external assessment before 30 minutes have elapsed from the start of writing time.
19. Students will not be permitted to leave in the last five minutes of the VCE external assessment.
20. Students must cease writing when instructed to do so by a supervisor.
21. Students must remain silent and seated in their place at the end of the VCE external assessment until response materials have been collected and checked, and an announcement is made permitting students to leave the examination room.

Students arriving late

Written examination, up to 30 minutes

A student arriving late for a **written examination, up to 30 minutes** after the scheduled start of writing time, will be admitted to the examination room. The student is allowed the full writing time but is given no allowance for reading time.

Written examination, after 30 minutes

A student arriving late for a **written examination, after 30 minutes** from the scheduled start of writing time, but before the scheduled finish of writing time, may be admitted only if all the following conditions are met:

- The principal of the host school, or the principal's delegate, recommends the student's admittance.

- The student is admitted into the room on the understanding that their response materials may not be accepted by the VCAA. The student must be advised of this condition and must sign acceptance of this requirement on a statutory declaration.
- The student completes a statutory declaration immediately following the conclusion of the examination declaring:
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 - the reason for being late to the examination
 - the time of admittance to the examination room
 - they have not seen or read the examination question book prior to their admittance
 - they have not received any information about the contents of the examination question book
 - they understand that their response materials may not be accepted by the VCAA.
- Appropriate arrangements can be made to enable the student to complete the examination and that it can be completed without disruption to other students.

The student is allowed the full writing time but is given no allowance for reading time.

VCE performance and Languages oral examinations and the Extended Investigation oral presentation

Students are required to observe the following rules for the conduct of VCE performance and Languages oral examinations and the Extended Investigation oral presentation conducted by the VCAA, as well as the day-to-day rules of the venue.

VCAA rules shall apply with appropriate and reasonable modifications to students who have disabilities or other impairments.

All supervisors/Venue Coordinators are issued with directions for the administration of VCE performance and Languages oral examinations and the Extended Investigation oral presentation and are required to report all alleged breaches of these rules to the VCAA.

Supervisors/Venue Coordinators have the right to check any authorised materials that are taken into a VCE performance and Languages oral examinations and the Extended Investigation oral presentation.

1. Students must not cheat or assist other students to cheat, including taking any action that gives or attempts to give them or another student an unfair advantage in a VCE external assessment.
2. Students must not allow, induce or assist any other person to present for a VCE external assessment in their place.
3. Students must not present for a VCE external assessment in another student's place.

4. Students must not present for a VCE external assessment under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
5. Students must obey and observe all instructions or directions given by VCAA appointed representatives.
6. Students must provide reasonable assistance to any investigation conducted by or on behalf of the VCAA in relation to a suspected breach of the VCAA rules.
7. Students must not bring into or possess in the examination room any drinks or food, except under special circumstances as approved and directed by the VCAA. Bottled water is permitted in the examination room under approved conditions.
8. Students must not communicate with any other student while the VCE external assessment is being conducted, except where this is necessary for the conduct of the assessment.
9. Students must not cause any nuisance, annoyance or interference to any other student during a VCE external assessment.
10. Students must not communicate with an assessor before, during or after a VCE external assessment, except when communication is necessary for the conduct of the assessment.
11. Students attending a VCE external assessment may bring only materials and equipment approved for that external assessment into the examination room.
12. Students undertaking **Languages Oral Examinations and Extended Investigation Oral Presentations** are not permitted to bring audio devices (e.g., mobile phones, tablets, MP3 players, iPods and laptops) into examination rooms. Dictionaries and thesauruses of any kind are **not** permitted.
13. Students undertaking **Performance Examinations** are permitted to bring approved audio devices (e.g., mobile phones, tablets, MP3 players, iPods and laptops) into the examination room where these are to be used as part of the performance. These devices **MUST NOT** be used to record, store, receive or transmit information during the external assessment.
14. Where a student is detected, or is suspected of, using any device contrary to these rules, that student must provide all reasonable assistance to any supervisor, assessor, the VCAA or its agents, as applicable, to allow them to interrogate the device as part of an investigation of any suspected breach of the VCAA rules.
15. All materials provided to assessors by students as part of the **Performance Examinations** process must remain with assessors. Students must not remove any of these materials from the examination room.

Appendix II: Rules for school-based assessment

Reproduced from the VCAA VCE Handbook

The VCAA authentication rules for school-based assessment state that a student must:

- make sure that all work submitted for assessment is their own
- not plagiarise
- not cheat
- acknowledge all resources used, including
 - texts, websites and other source material
 - the name and status of any person or source who provided assistance and the type of assistance provided
- not receive undue assistance from another person, including their teacher, or source in the preparation and submission of work
- not submit the same piece of work for assessment in more than one study, or more than once within a study
- not circulate or publish a piece of work that is being submitted for assessment in a study in the academic year of enrolment
- not knowingly assist another student in a breach of rules.

Acceptable levels of assistance include:

- incorporating ideas or material derived from other sources (for example, by reading, viewing or note-taking) but which have been transformed by the student and used in a new context
- prompting and general advice from another person or source, which leads to refinements or self-correction or both.

Unacceptable forms of assistance include:

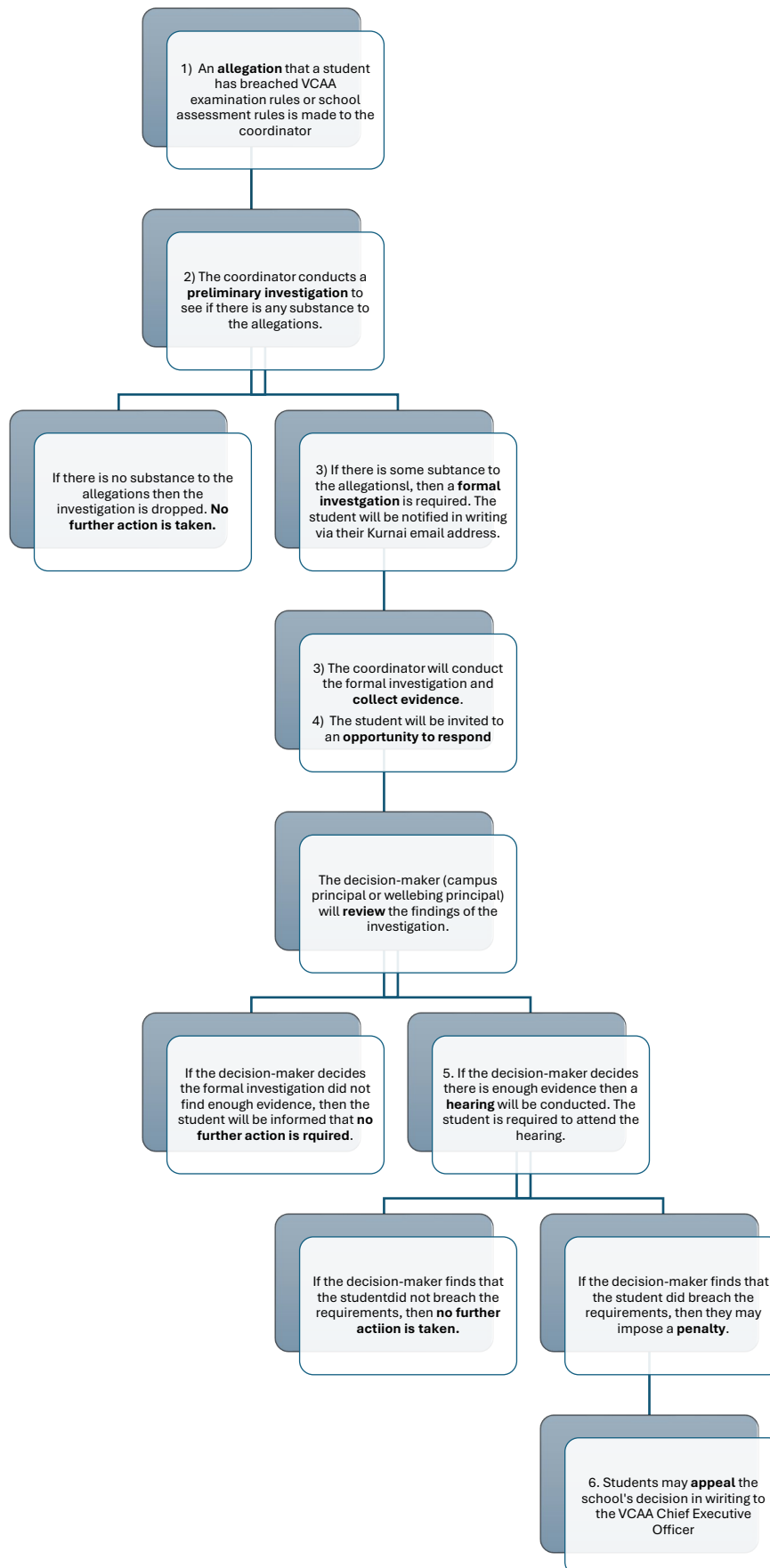
- use of or copying another person's work, including their teacher's work, another source's work or other resources without acknowledgement
- use of or copying sample answers provided by their teacher, another person or another source
- corrections or improvements made or dictated by another person, including their teacher.

In considering if a student's work is their own, teachers should consider if the work:

- is atypical of other work produced by the student
- is inconsistent with the teacher's knowledge of the student's ability
- contains unacknowledged material
- has not been sighted and monitored by the teacher during its development.

Students who complete school-based assessment work outside class must sign and submit the VCAA **Authentication record for school-based assessment** form.

Appendix III: Process for determining breaches of assessment rules



1. **Allegations** must relate to a breach of the school rules or VCAA Examination rules. Allegations can be made by a teacher, student, a parent or guardian, or an external party such as a tutor. Allegations must be made directly to the coordinator.
2. **Preliminary Investigations** must occur within two school days of an allegation being made. The coordinator conducts the investigation, which determined whether or not there is substance to the allegations to warrant further investigation.
3. **Formal investigations** are also conducted by the coordinator and must occur within three days of the preliminary investigation occurring. The coordinator will collect relevant evidence.
4. **Opportunity to respond** is an interview where the student can as part of the formal investigation process, students will be notified of the allegations against them and given an opportunity to respond. Students will receive an email to their Kurnai account, which they should read carefully. This email may include requests for certain information, which the student should try to provide. Students must be given at least two days' notice of this interview. *Please note:* Students can elect to bring a support person such as a parent, a school staff member not related to the allegations, a guardian or a peer. The support person is there to provide moral support, rather than to represent the student or to speak on their behalf. Alternatively, a student could choose to not attend the interview but respond in writing, which must be submitted by the date of the interview.
5. **Hearings** are conducted by the principal to decide if, on the balance of probabilities, the student did breach the school assessment rules or VCAA Examination Rules. Hearings must occur within five school days of the formal investigation concluding. Students are required to attend hearings and will be notified of a hearing via their Kurnai email address. Students can bring a support person. The result of the hearing (including any penalties) must be communicated to the student in writing within five school days of the hearing. Possible penalties include:
 - a verbal or written warning
 - detention or suspension
 - refusal to consider the student's work but an opportunity for the student to resubmit the work if there is sufficient time before the due date for submission of results according to the VCAA schedule
 - refusal to accept the part of the student's work found to have been completed in contravention of VCAA rules and a subsequent determination of the appropriate result for the relevant outcome or module forming part of the VCE or VPC unit.
6. **Appeals** of the decision made during a hearing can be made in writing to the VCAA Chief Executive Officer within fourteen days of receiving the written notification of the outcome. Schools can then respond within five days by confirming their decision, rescinding their decision or reducing the penalty imposed. If the student wants to continue with the appeal, the VCAA conducts a rehearing where a review committee hears evidence from both the student and the school. It is not a review of the school's procedures and handling of the allegation(s) against the student.

If the review committee is satisfied on the balance of probabilities that the student has breached VCAA rules relating to school-based assessment, it may decide to:

- reprimand the student
- permit the student, if practicable, to resubmit the schoolwork required for either
- assessment in the study or the course
- satisfactory completion of the study or the course
- refuse to accept part of the work and request the school to assess the student on the remainder of the work submitted
- amend the student's school-based assessment results.