



Advice &  
Support at  
Keele SU

## **COLLUSION & CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

Advice & Support at Keele SU (ASK) is a dedicated advice service that is independent from the university. ASK Advisers provide free, confidential, and impartial advice to our students on a range of issues.

### **What is collusion?**

Collusion is where an individual piece of work is prepared by more than one student. This could include working with another student too closely, copying someone's work, or willingly sharing your work.

### **What is conflict of interest?**

A conflict of interest occurs when ASK's ability to provide impartial advice that is in your best interests is compromised by the interest of another party. In cases where there is a conflict of interest, ASK will only provide advice and representation to the first party that contacted us.

### **Does this apply to collusion?**

ASK operates an exception to this Conflict of Interest Policy in cases involving collusion. We have this exception because it is not possible for students to get independent advice on collusion from anywhere else other than ASK.

In these cases, ASK may advise both parties, provided that proper processes are followed.

### **How will you make sure that the cases are kept separate?**

The cases are dealt with by different ASK Advisers who will not talk about the cases with each other and will not access information relating to the other case.

ASK Advisers will be supervised in relation to your case by different staff.

There are rare cases where the number of students involved in a case is higher than the number of ASK Advisers available. In these cases, it may be necessary to arrange alternative support outside of ASK, such as from Elected Officers.

**Will the other student have access to my case?**

No, the other student will not have access to any of the information you give to ASK.

**In what circumstances will ASK disclose to another student that I have accessed the service?**

If the other student(s) involved in your collusion case approaches ASK for advice and/or representation, we will tell them that we are advising another party in the case. We will not give out any more information than that.

We will also notify you that another party is being advised by ASK.

ASK reserves the right not to disclose where we believe there is a risk of harm to anyone in doing so.

**Will I be told the outcome of the other student's case?**

No, the information will remain confidential.

**I am happy to continue being advised by ASK on this basis, what do I need to do now?**

Please send an email to your ASK Adviser or [su.ask@keele.ac.uk](mailto:su.ask@keele.ac.uk) confirming that you have read through this leaflet, and you are happy to continue to be advised by ASK. You can change your mind at any time.

**What if I decide I am not happy to continue receiving advice from ASK on this basis?**

ASK will be able to provide you with some general information on collusion. We will also refer you to one of the Elected Officers, who may be able to support you at the meeting.

**Will I still be able to come to ASK for advice on other issues where there is no conflict of interest?**

Yes, absolutely!

**I don't think the policy is fair and want to talk to someone about this.**

We welcome your feedback on this policy and this factsheet. If you would like to discuss this policy, you can contact Matt Steele, Head of Student Engagement, at [m.steele@keele.ac.uk](mailto:m.steele@keele.ac.uk).