

# ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY

## Academic Integrity Policy

### 1. Introductory Matters

a. The Queen's University **Senate Academic Integrity Policy** ("the Policy") states that students, faculty, and staff have responsibilities to support and uphold the fundamental values of academic integrity: honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility and courage.

The Policy includes procedures (**Senate Academic Integrity Procedures – Requirements for Faculties and Schools**) ("the Procedures") of general application to be used by those who are responsible for implementing academic integrity procedures in the Faculties and Schools. Additional guidelines and resources for instructors and students are available on the **Queen's Academic Integrity website**.

The purposes of the Procedures are to:

- affirm the University's dedication to the values of academic integrity and the seriousness with which it treats departures;
- protect the academic integrity of the University and the value of its courses, programs, and degrees;
- explain the responsibilities of students, instructors, and staff;
- ensure the rights of students are protected; and
- ensure consistency among Faculties and Schools and the equitable treatment of students.

The Policy and these Procedures apply to all members of the Queen's University community including students, instructors, and staff. They govern all assessed academic activities that receive acknowledgement from the University.

Proceedings under these Procedures are also governed by the Policy, any applicable rules of the School of Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs ("the SGSPA") and of Senate and the University, and the principles of procedural fairness.

Titles and headings in these Procedures are for convenience only and shall not be relied on for any purpose related to the construction, interpretation or application of any provision in these Procedures.

For more information, see the **Senate Academic Integrity Procedures – Requirements for Faculties and Schools**, Section 1.

b. Maintenance, Retention, Release and Destruction of Records

The SGSPA must maintain the records required under these Procedures for the purposes of possible further actions or appeals, the annual report and other uses permitted by University regulations. The SGSPA must ensure that the relevant records are filed, retained, released and destroyed only as provided in these Procedures and other University regulations, and in accordance with the University's authorized Records Retention Schedules (<http://records-retention.library.queensu.ca/directory-records.php>) (Section OP4000/5000 Student Records Management).

When there is a finding of a departure from academic integrity categorized as Level I (see section 3.1.4.5 below and Section 3.4.3 of the **Senate Academic Integrity Procedures**), the SGSPA must create and maintain a file. Information in such files may only be released as permitted or required by these Procedures or when there is a future finding with respect to the same student. These records are destroyed upon the student's graduation.

When there is a finding of a departure from academic integrity categorized as Level II (see section 3.1.4.5 below and Section 3.4.3 of the **Senate Academic Integrity Procedures**) the SGSPA must ensure that the relevant documents are added to the Official File established for the student in the SGSPA Office. Such information may only be released as permitted or required by these Procedures or by other University regulations, or with the student's consent. These records are destroyed 10 years after the student's graduation.

Records of academic integrity investigations, findings, remedies and sanctions, or appeals may not be retained in any other files maintained by the instructor, department, or SGSPA.

For more information, see the **Senate Academic Integrity Procedures – Requirements for Faculties and Schools**, Section 1.

c. Graduation during Investigation, Appeal or Withdrawal Period

No student may graduate while their conduct is the subject of an ongoing academic integrity investigation or appeal, even if the course(s) or other academic matter under investigation is not required to complete the degree. When an investigation is initiated during a student's final year of study or involves a course or other requirement needed in order for the student to be eligible to graduate, all parties shall make reasonable attempts to expedite the investigation and appeal process before the expected convocation date.



No student who has been required to withdraw due to a departure from academic integrity may apply to graduate during the withdrawal period.

## 2. Types of Departures from Academic Integrity

### 2.1 Integrity in Action: The Core Values

Queen's University is dedicated to creating a scholarly community free to explore a range of ideas, to build and advance knowledge and to share the ideas and knowledge that emerge from a range of intellectual pursuits. Each core value of academic integrity, as defined in the Senate *Academic Integrity Policy*, gives rise to and supports the next.

**Honesty** appears in presenting one's own academic work, whether in the context of an examination, written assignment, laboratory or seminar presentation. It is in researching one's own work for course assignments. It is also present in faithfully reporting laboratory results even when they do not conform to an original hypothesis. Further, honesty is present in acknowledging dependence on the ideas or words of another and in distinguishing one's own ideas and thoughts from other sources.

**Trust** exists in an environment in which one's own ideas can be expressed without fear of ridicule or fear that someone else will take credit for them.

**Fairness** appears in the proper and full acknowledgement of the contributions of collaborators in group projects and in the full participation of partners in collaborative projects.

**Respect**, in a general sense, is part of an intellectual community that recognizes the participatory nature of the learning process and honours and respects a wide range of opinions and ideas. However, "respect" appears in a very particular sense when students attend class, pay attention, contribute to discussion and submit papers on time; instructors "show respect by taking students' ideas seriously, by recognizing them as individuals, helping them develop their ideas, providing full and honest feedback on their work, and valuing their perspectives and their goals" ("The Fundamental Values of Academic Integrity" (<https://academicintegrity.org/resources/fundamental-values/>), 3rd Edition, p. 8).

Ultimately, **responsibility** is both personal and collective and engages students, administrators, faculty and staff in creating and maintaining a learning environment supported by and supporting academic integrity.

**Courage** differs from the preceding values by being more a quality or capacity of character – the capacity to act in accordance with one's values despite fear" ("The Fundamental Values of Academic Integrity" (<https://academicintegrity.org/>

[resources/fundamental-values/](https://academicintegrity.org/)"), 3rd edition, p. 10). Courage is displayed by students who make choices and integrous decisions that are followed by action, even in the face of peer pressure to cheat, copy another's material, provide their own work to others to facilitate cheating, or otherwise represent themselves dishonestly. Students also display courage by acknowledging prior wrongdoing and taking proactive measures to rectify any associated negative impact.

All of these values are not merely abstract but are expressed in and reinforced by the University's policies and practices.

### 2.2 Departures from Academic Integrity

As outlined in "Integrity in Action: The Core Values" (section 2.1), the six fundamental values of honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility, and courage support the entire educational experience of the University. Adhering to these values in all academic work ensures the value of the degree, the integrity of the institution and the integrity of individual achievement. Contravening any of these values compromises the integrity of the student's experience in completing academic work, working with peers, and interacting with instructors.

Some examples of specific conduct and actions that may constitute departures from academic integrity are listed below. The list is not exhaustive, as other conduct and actions may also be found to be departures.

"Conduct" may include any actions or oral or written statements that may give rise to concerns about a possible departure from academic integrity, or taking steps in furtherance of a plan to engage in a departure from academic integrity.

"Work" may include essays, papers, assignments, journal entries, tests, examinations, laboratory reports or results, or any other product of academic work.

Within a graduate program, it is essential that an environment exists in which faculty and students have the utmost regard for the principles of academic integrity. Honesty and mutual trust constitute the very basis of all scientific and scholarly exchange. It is the responsibility of the entire University community to contribute to creating a community based on the principles of academic integrity.

As emphasized in Queen's University's Senate Policy on Integrity in Research (<https://www.queensu.ca/secretariat/sites/webpublish.queensu.ca.uslclwwww/files/files/senate/Senate%20Policy%20on%20Integrity%20in%20Research%20-%20Revised%20January%202018.pdf>) (Approved by the Senate January 29, 2009, revised January 30, 2018),

"The responsibilities of the University include promoting integrity in research and scholarship, investigating allegations of misconduct, imposing appropriate sanctions if misconduct has occurred and reporting cases of misconduct appropriately" (p.1).

Graduate students must:

- pursue their research activities in a manner that is consistent with the highest standards of ethical and scientific practice;
- adhere to Queen's University's ethics boards, the General Research Ethics Board (GREB) and the Health Sciences Research Ethics Board
- carry out research in honest search for knowledge, base findings upon a critical appraisal and interpretation according to scientific, scholarly and/or creative principles appropriate to the particular discipline.
- The research conducted for the Master's essay, Master's thesis or Doctoral dissertation, and the resulting document, comprises the most significant part of the graduate research degree requirements, so that research and the resulting document must meet the highest standards of research and academic integrity. Consequently, graduate programs and the SGSPA, in adherence to the Senate Policy, will have jurisdiction to make decisions about and deliver sanctions for, these separate kinds of departures from academic integrity:
- in the case of graduate level courses, or a required course taken by a graduate student;
- in the case of non-coursework graduate degree requirements, such as the comprehensive examination (or equivalent)
- in the case of research carried out for the essay, thesis or dissertation, and/or the final document itself.

It is assumed that since graduate students have gone through several years of post-secondary education prior to their graduate level studies, they will have familiarity with the general principles and expectations of academic integrity in coursework, non-coursework requirements, and research in their discipline, Department, Program and/or School. It is also assumed that graduate students will therefore understand the importance of these principles, and will be aware of consequences of departures from these principles.

"Master's Essay" refers to the major, terminal research component of any Master's degree, currently represented by the course number 898; "Master's Thesis" refers to the substantive, terminal research document of any research Master's degree, currently represented by the course number 899; "Doctoral Dissertation" refers to the substantive,

terminal research document of all Doctoral level degrees, currently represented by the course number 999.

In this policy, "The Associate Dean of the SGSPA" refers to the Associate Dean of the SGSPA who has responsibility for the graduate department/program of the student whose case is under review.

### **2.2.1 DEPARTURE FROM THE CORE VALUES OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

In addition to the specific types of departures from academic integrity listed below, "Departure from the Core Values of Academic Integrity" encompasses a range of conduct and infractions. Any acts that deviate from the core values of academic integrity (section 2.1) that do not fall under the specific categories listed below may be categorized under this broader heading.

In the educational context, there is, for instance, trust that students will abide by the core values of academic integrity and not violate these values or attempt to violate this trust. Therefore, attempts at plagiarism, facilitation, and other departures are as much a threat to academic integrity as submitting a plagiarized paper or working with a peer to undermine integrity.

Honesty plays a role in exchanges with instructors and peers, especially in a professionalized setting, where authentic self-representation and truthfulness are essential.

Investigations and findings under this broad category will cite one or more of these six values and indicate how the activity contravenes these values and compromises the integrity of the educational experience. "The Fundamental Values of Academic Integrity" (3rd edition) developed by the International Centre for Academic Integrity provides guidance on the meaning of these six values in relation to the educational experience.

### **2.2.2. PLAGIARISM**

Plagiarism involves presenting ideas, words or work, created by others or by technological assistance, as if they are one's own or without proper attribution/citation. Self-plagiarism is also a departure from academic integrity. Self-plagiarism refers to the practice of submitting the same work, in whole or in part, for credit in two or more courses, or in the same course more than once, without the prior written permission of the instructor. Self-plagiarism can also include presenting one's own previously published work as though it were new.

Examples: copying or using quotations or paraphrasing material from a print or other source, including the internet and output from artificial intelligence, without proper acknowledgement; copying another student's work;



submitting the same piece of work in more than one course without permission.

### **2.2.3. UNAUTHORIZED CONTENT GENERATION**

Unauthorized content generation is the production of academic work, in whole or in part, for academic credit, progression, or award, using unapproved or undeclared human or technological assistance.

Examples: Response generation from artificial intelligence including, but not limited to, text-, image-, code-, or video-generating artificial intelligence tools; submitting assignments to online forums or websites for generating solutions.

### **2.2.4. CONTRACT CHEATING**

Contract cheating is a form of plagiarism that involves outsourcing academic work to a third-party including, but not limited to, a commercial provider, current or former student, family member or acquaintance, and submitting the work as one's own.

Examples: purchasing a term paper or assignment to be submitted as one's own; submitting essays or assignments that have been obtained from homework sites, essay mills, tutor sites, friends, family members or classmates.

### **2.2.5. USE OF UNAUTHORIZED MATERIALS**

Use of unauthorized materials involves using or possessing unauthorized materials or obtaining unauthorized assistance in any academic examination or test, or in connection with any other form of academic work.

Examples: Using or possessing unauthorized written material or an electronic device with memory and/or web access such as a calculator, cell phone or smart watch that is not permitted during a test or examination; copying another student's test or examination answer; receiving answers from an exam or test bank website.

### **2.2.6. DECEPTION**

Deception involves misrepresenting the accuracy of information, the authenticity of a document, one's self, one's work, or one's relation to the University.

Examples: creating or causing to be created and/or submitting any falsified official academic document, including a transcript; altering any official academic documents, including transcripts; creating and/or submitting any falsified medical note; altering any information on documentation provided by a third party (such as a date); impersonating someone in a test or examination or allowing someone to impersonate you; fabricating or falsifying laboratory or research data; using another person's credentials or

representing yourself as having credentials that are not rightfully yours.

### **2.2.7. FACILITATION**

Facilitation involves enabling another student's breach of academic integrity.

Examples: allowing academic work to be copied by another student for submission as that student's work; selling academic work; making information available to another student about the exam questions or possible answers during an online or take-home exam window.

### **2.2.8. UNAUTHORIZED USE OF INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY**

Using the intellectual property of another for academic, personal, or professional advantage without the authorization of the owner.

Examples: uploading course materials to a note-sharing website without the instructor's permission; providing course materials to a commercial study-prep service not sanctioned by the University; distributing, publicly posting, selling or otherwise disseminating an instructor's course materials or providing an instructor's course materials to anyone else for distribution, posting, sale or other means of dissemination, without the instructor's express consent.

### **2.2.9. UNAUTHORIZED COLLABORATION**

Unauthorized collaboration involves working with others, without the specific permission of the instructor, on academic work that will be submitted for a grade.

Examples: working with others on in-class or take-home tests, papers, or homework assignments that are meant to be completed individually; communicating with another person during an exam or about an exam during the exam window.

### **2.2.10. FAILURE TO ABIDE BY ACADEMIC RULES**

Failing to abide by Faculty/School or University academic rules and regulations.

Examples: failing to follow rules imposed by course instructors, or others (for example, teaching assistants, guest or substitute instructors), regarding the preparation, writing, and submission of academic work; failing to follow rules set out by instructors or the Exams Office in the writing of tests and examinations; failing to follow regulations governing ethics reviews; failing to comply with assigned remedies and sanctions resulting from a departure from academic integrity; unauthorized removal of materials from a library.

## **3. Academic Integrity Investigation related to**



### **3.1. Graduate level courses, or a required course taken by a graduate student**

#### **3.1.1 Review of Documents**

##### **3.1.1.1 Delegation of Investigation**

In most cases, the course instructor investigates a possible departure from academic integrity and decides the finding.

However, when an instructor is unable to investigate and/or decide the finding, the Department/Program Head may delegate the responsibility to another individual with appropriate subject matter expertise. In these Procedures, all references to an “instructor” include such a delegate.

##### **3.1.1.2 Initial Collection of Evidence**

To begin investigating a possible departure from academic integrity, the instructor shall assemble all documents related to the case. Such documents may include:

- the work submitted by the student for academic credit;
- the source(s) from which the work submitted by the student is apparently derived;
- instructions describing the nature of the work to be done;
- the course syllabus;
- any email between instructor and student relating to the work;
- documents alleged to be altered; and
- documents used by the instructor or the Department stating policies on departures from academic integrity.

##### **3.1.1.3 Guidance for Instructors**

While collecting evidence (see **Senate Academic Integrity Procedures – Requirements for Faculties and Schools**, Section 1.3) the instructor is encouraged to seek guidance from the Department/Program Chair and/or Graduate Coordinator, or the SGSPA concerning matters relating to departures from academic integrity. The instructor should also seek guidance as needed from the University's Legal Counsel regarding the specifics of the case, or from the Office of the Ombudsperson concerning University policy and procedures more generally.

##### **3.1.1.4 Dismissal of Investigation**

If, after a careful review of the evidence collected during the initial collection of evidence, the instructor determines that there is insufficient evidence to continue with the investigation of a possible departure from academic integrity, the case will be dismissed. All documents related to the case must be destroyed and the student shall not be informed of the instructor's investigation.

### **3.1.2 Engaging with the Student**

#### **3.1.2.1 Notification by the Instructor**

If, after their initial collection of evidence, the instructor determines that there is sufficient evidence to continue with the investigation of a possible departure from academic integrity, the instructor must use the “Notice of Investigation of a Possible Departure from Academic Integrity” form (“the NOI”) to notify the student of the alleged departure from academic integrity. The following information shall be included in the NOI and sent by email to the student's Queen's email account:

- the evidence on which the investigation is based, including all documents upon which the instructor will rely;
- the possible remedies and sanctions as outlined below;
- the student's right to respond to the investigation by meeting with the instructor or by providing a written response;
- the student's right to have representation in any response to the investigation; and
- the SGSPA resources available for consultation and the information on the website of the Office of the University Ombudsperson about student rights and responsibilities and University policies and procedures.

The student is not entitled to receive any notes or other documents created by the instructor to aid in the investigation except as required to permit the student to understand and respond to the allegations.

#### **3.1.2.2 Response from the Student**

Within 10 business days of the date that the NOI was emailed to the student, the student must respond to the NOI, indicating either the wish to meet with the instructor (see section 3.1.2.3) or their election to provide a written response (see section 3.1.2.4).

#### **3.1.2.3 Meeting with the Student**

If the student elects to meet with the instructor, the instructor shall determine whether the meeting will be in person, by telephone, or by video/audio conference. The instructor shall ask who, if anyone, will be present at the meeting with the student.

The instructor shall schedule a meeting as soon as possible.

The student has the right to know what material will be considered, and that at the meeting, the student will have the opportunity to respond to the evidence related to the alleged departure. The student is required to bring to the meeting copies of all documents on which they intend to rely in responding to the alleged departure.



At the meeting, the student may have a support person present, who may be a friend or family member, or an advisor or other professional, to provide emotional support and assistance. The support person may not be directly involved in the case, for example as a witness, and may not advocate on behalf of the student.

The instructor may also have an advisor present (typically the Head, or the Graduate Coordinator, or designate), who, if the instructor wishes, may take on the limited role of chairing the meeting and/or providing clarification of the procedures related to investigations of possible departures from academic integrity.

#### **3.1.2.4 Written Response from the Student**

If the student does not wish to meet, the student may submit a written response to the instructor no later than five business days after the student responds to the NOI indicating their election to submit a written response.

The response must include a detailed explanation of the student's case and all relevant documents in the student's possession on which they intend to rely, such as copies of earlier drafts of the work in question.

#### **3.1.2.5 Final Investigation Steps**

If the instructor receives new information about the alleged departure before issuing a finding, the instructor must disclose that information to the student and give them the option to respond to it, by way of a written submission, which must be submitted to the instructor no later than 5 business days after the student was informed of the new information.

If the student does not wish to attend a meeting or make any written response to the NOI, the instructor shall make a decision based on the available evidence.

#### **3.1.3 Deciding the Finding or Dismissal**

The instructor shall decide whether to make a finding of a departure from academic integrity or to dismiss the case based on:

- the applicable rules, regulations, policies and procedures, related to academic integrity;
- the evidence that was considered;
- the arguments made by the student; and
- their own assessment of the relative credibility and strength of the evidence.

At this point in the investigation, the instructor is not entitled to know about any previous departure(s) from academic integrity by the student, and any previous departure is not relevant to the finding.

#### **3.1.3.1 Dismissal**

If, after a careful review of the evidence and consideration of the response by the student, the instructor determines that a finding of departure from academic integrity is not supported, the case shall be dismissed.

The instructor must use the "Notice of Dismissal of Alleged Departure from Academic Integrity" form ("the Dismissal form") to inform the student that the investigation has been dismissed.

The Dismissal form shall be forwarded to the SGSPA to be maintained for reporting purposes only. This notice is kept as a means of tracking the number of cases of departures from academic integrity that arise in each academic year, in order to enable reporting to Senate. No personal information related to the student is included on this form. The student shall not be identified on the form.

All other documents related to the case must be destroyed by the instructor.

#### **3.1.3.2 Deciding the Finding of a Departure from Academic Integrity**

If, after a careful review of the evidence and consideration of the response by the student, the instructor determines that there is sufficient evidence to conclude that it is more likely than not (i.e. on a "balance of probabilities") that a departure from academic integrity occurred, the instructor must complete a "Finding of a Departure from Academic Integrity" form ("the Finding form") and will follow the steps below to determine an appropriate remedy or sanction.

##### **3.1.3.2.1 Contact the SGSPA AI Administrator**

Where there is a finding of departure from academic integrity, the instructor shall contact the SGSPA AI Administrator to determine whether a record of a previous finding of a departure from academic integrity by the student exists. If a record exists, the SGSPA AI Administrator shall inform the instructor. The instructor shall then indicate on the Finding form that:

- a. the departure is categorized as Level II (see section 3.1.4.; and
- b. the case is being referred to the SGSPA for the assignment of an appropriate remedy or sanction (see section 3.1.5).

The instructor shall then email the Finding form to the student (see section 3.1.3.2 ).

#### **3.1.4 Deciding the Remedy or Sanction**

If the SGSPA AI Administrator confirms there is no record of a previous finding of a departure from academic integrity by the student, the instructor shall decide a remedy or sanction from those available to the instructor (see section 3.1.4.4) or refer the matter to the SGSPA to determine an appropriate remedy or sanction (see section 3.1.5).

The remedy or sanction must be meaningful to ensure that students understand the importance of academic integrity to the academic community at Queen's and its vital importance in maintaining the integrity of degrees granted by the University. A remedy or sanction must also preserve fairness amongst students in a course or program. The instructor may contact the SGSPA for information about the remedies or sanctions imposed in similar previous cases.

#### **3.1.4.1 Factors to Consider**

The instructor shall consider several factors in deciding the appropriate remedy or sanction. Careful consideration of the factors listed below will help to ensure that the remedy or sanction is fair, reasonable, and proportionate to the gravity of the departure found.

Factors that should be considered in deciding a remedy or sanction include:

- the extent and seriousness of the departure;
- any educational measures that may be undertaken to ensure that the student understands the departure and what should have been the appropriate conduct in such circumstances;
- the value of the academic work in relation to the overall grade for the course;
- the experience of the student (for example, a first-year or an upper-year student; a student experienced in the discipline or a student in an elective course);
- any mitigating and/or aggravating circumstances; and
- possible direct injury to another student or the institution.

#### **3.1.4.2 Mitigating Circumstances**

Although mitigating circumstances do not exonerate or excuse a student from the finding of a departure from academic integrity, such circumstances should be taken into account to ensure that the remedy or sanction is reasonable and appropriate. The onus is on the student to provide evidence of such mitigating circumstances. Examples of mitigating circumstances that may be relevant include:

- documented evidence from an appropriate health care professional of factors directly compromising the student's capacity to understand or adhere to

the standards of academic integrity at the time of the departure;

- prompt admission to the alleged departure from academic integrity by the student and expression of contrition and willingness to undertake educative remedies; or
- evidence that reasonable steps were not taken to bring the standards and expectations regarding academic integrity to the attention of the student (for example, expectations were not included in the course syllabus).

#### **3.1.4.3 Aggravating Circumstances**

Aggravating circumstances may also have an impact on the appropriate and reasonable remedy or sanction and should also be taken into account. Examples of aggravating circumstances that may be relevant include, but are not limited to:

- evidence of a deliberate attempt to gain advantage;
- evidence of an active attempt to conceal the departure;
- the departure has been committed by an upper-year student who ought to be familiar with the expectations for academic integrity in the discipline, program/department and/or SGSPA;
- conduct that intimidates others or provokes misconduct by others; or
- direct harm to another student or to the University.

#### **3.1.4.4. Range of Remedies and Sanctions that may be imposed by the Instructor**

The remedy or sanction should reflect the extent and gravity of the departure from academic integrity and should be consistent with the remedies or sanctions imposed in similar previous cases in the Program/Department and/or the SGSPA.

The instructor may impose one or more of a range of remedies or sanctions including:

- an oral or written warning that such infractions constitute unacceptable behaviour;
- a learning experience involving rewriting or revising the original work within a stipulated period of time;
- the submission of new or other work within a stipulated period of time;
- the deduction of partial or total loss of marks for the work or exam;
- a deduction of a percentage of the final grade in the course; or
- a failing grade (down to a grade of zero) in the course.



If the remedy or sanction affects the student's grade in the course, the student may NOT drop the course regardless of the drop deadlines, and the student may be reinstated in the course if the course was dropped prior to the finding being decided.

### **3.1.4.5 Categorizing the Departure**

In deciding an appropriate remedy or sanction, instructors are asked to distinguish between minor (Level I) and major (Level II) departures from academic integrity.

Records of Level I findings are maintained by the SGSPA for use only if there is a future finding of a departure by the same student. Records of Level II findings form part of the student's file in the SGSPA and are retained for 10 years after the student's graduation. This practice of separating a Level I departure from the student's file balances remediation and sanction. Sanctions are necessary when there are findings of major or multiple departures from academic integrity, but remedies that seek to educate students about academic integrity may be allowed for minor departures without punitive sanctions.

Instructors shall categorize the departure as either Level I or II based on the guidelines below in light of their familiarity with the case and the surrounding circumstances, using informed judgment and reasonable discretion. Instructors should consider the individual factor or relevant combination of factors in deciding the level of the departure. It is not necessary that all factors be considered. Instructors are encouraged to obtain advice from the SGSPA about the categorization of the departure.

#### **3.1.4.5.1 Level I Considerations**

Instructors may be guided by a combination of the following and similar factors when categorizing the departure as Level I:

- this is the first finding of a departure from academic integrity by the student;
- the departure is related to academic work that does not count for a significant proportion of the course grade;
- the sanction will not necessarily result in a failure in the course;
- the student is at an early stage of their academic career, especially a first-year student; or
- the student has little or no experience in a course in the Department (for example, a first-time experience in a particular department).

#### **3.1.4.5.2 Level II Considerations**

If there is a record of a previous departure(s) from academic integrity by the student, any subsequent departures are automatically categorized as Level II departures. The case must then be referred to the SGSPA for a remedy or sanction to be decided.

Instructors may be guided by a combination of the following and similar factors, as well as any aggravating circumstances (see section 3.1.4.3), when categorizing the departure as Level II:

- the departure is related to academic work that counts for a significant proportion of the course grade;
- the sanction will result in a failure in the course;
- the student is in an upper year and has taken several previous courses in the discipline;
- significant and unacknowledged use of one or more sources is involved;
- significant departure from professionalism or accreditation standards is involved;
- the incident involves more than one type of departure ;
- direct damage to the integrity of the student's program or the integrity of the University is involved; or
- direct negative impact on other students is involved (for example, stealing another student's academic work).

### **3.1.5 Referral of the Case to the SGSPA**

The instructor must refer the case to the SGSPA to decide the remedy or sanction, if:

- there is a record of a previous finding of a departure from academic integrity on file in the SGSPA; or
- after the instructor considers all the factors above in assessing the gravity of the departure, they believe that a more serious sanction than those that may be imposed by an instructor (see section 3.1.4.4) is warranted.

When a case is referred by the instructor, the role of the SGSPA is to review and consider the factors of the case only as they relate to the decision of an appropriate remedy or sanction. The SGSPA must not re-consider the instructor's decision on the finding of the departure.

When referring a case, the instructor shall indicate on the Finding form that the case is being referred to the SGSPA for the assignment of an appropriate remedy or sanction and email the Finding form to the student (see section 3.1.3.2).

All original documents related to the case, including the submitted work and any relevant correspondence, and the 'Notice of Investigation' and the 'Finding' forms, shall be forwarded to the SGSPA AI Administrator to be considered by the SGSPA Associate Dean in determining an appropriate



remedy or sanction. No documentation may be retained by the instructor or placed in a departmental student file.

### **3.1.5.1 Range of Remedies and Sanctions that may be imposed by the SGSPA Associate Dean**

The SGSPA Associate Dean may impose any of the remedies or sanctions available to the instructor (see section 3.1.4.4.) as well as the following sanctions:

- an official written warning that the penalty for a subsequent offence could be a requirement to withdraw from the University for a specified minimum period of time;
- the rescinding of University- or Faculty-awarded scholarships, prizes and/or bursaries;
- a requirement to withdraw from the University for a specified minimum period of time; OR
- recommending to the SGS Academic Appeal Board the revocation or rescinding of a degree

### **3.1.5.2 Requirement to Withdraw, or, Revocation or Rescinding of a Degree**

When the SGSPA Associate Dean determines that a requirement to withdraw from the University or the revocation or rescinding of a degree is the appropriate sanction, the SGSPA Associate Dean must consult with the Chair of the Academic Integrity Subcommittee to ensure that such sanctions are imposed consistently across the University.

If the Chair of the Academic Integrity Subcommittee is satisfied that the proposed sanction is in accordance with University standards, the Associate Dean shall notify the student in writing of the sanction and include the reasons for the decision (see section 3.1.6).

Following the deadline to appeal the sanction, or after all avenues of appeal have been exhausted and the requirement to withdraw or revocation or rescinding of a degree is confirmed, the SGSPA shall forward the requirement to withdraw from the University, or the rescinding of the degree, to:

- the Office of the University Registrar for the notation to be added to the student's transcript; and
- the University Secretariat, who will notify the student of the final decision.

If the Chair of the Academic Integrity Subcommittee is not satisfied that the proposed sanction is in accordance with University standards, the SGSPA Associate Dean shall reconsider and adjust the proposed sanction.

## **3.1.6 Informing the Student**

### **3.1.6.1 Finding and Remedy or Sanction by Instructor**

If the instructor decides that the finding warrants a remedy or sanction within the scope of those available to the instructor (see section 3.1.4.4), and the case is not being referred to the SGSPA, the instructor must complete the Finding form and email it to the student's Queen's email account to inform the student of the outcome of the investigation.

The completed form supplies the student with the following information:

- the details of the finding of a departure from academic integrity;
- the reasons for the finding and the evidence upon which the finding is based;
- whether the departure is categorized as Level I or Level II and the applicable provisions with respect to the retention and release of records;
- the remedy(ies) or sanction(s);
- the reasons for the remedy(ies) or sanction(s), including any mitigating or aggravating circumstances;
- the student's right to appeal the finding and/or the remedy or sanction to the SGSPA;
- the deadline for appealing to the SGSPA;
- the SGSPA resources available for consultation and the information on the website of the Office of the University Ombudsperson about student rights and responsibilities and University policies and procedures; and
- if the student is studying at Queen's on an exchange program or on a Letter of Permission and the departure is categorized as Level II, or if the student is in a collaborative degree program offered jointly with another post-secondary institution (the "partner institution"), that the student's home university or the partner institution, as applicable, will be notified of the finding and remedy or sanction if the finding is confirmed after all avenues of appeal have expired or been exhausted (see section 3.6).

### **3.1.6.2 Finding by Instructor with Referral for Remedy or Sanction**

When a case has to be referred to the SGSPA for the assignment of a remedy or sanction, the instructor must complete the Finding form to provide the details of the finding, the reasons for the finding, the evidence upon which the finding was made, and the categorization of the departure as Level I or Level II. The instructor must email the Finding form to the student's Queen's email account to inform the student of the outcome of the investigation and



the referral of the case to the SGSPA for the assignment of the remedy or sanction.

The SGSPA shall decide the remedy or sanction and must inform the student and the instructor in writing of the following:

- the remedy(ies) or sanction(s);
- the reasons for the remedy(ies) or sanction(s), including any mitigating or aggravating circumstances;
- the student's right to appeal the finding and/or the remedy(ies) or sanction(s);
- the deadline for appealing;
- the SGSPA resources available for consultation and the information on the website of the Office of the University Ombudsperson about student rights and responsibilities and University policies and procedures; and
- if the student is studying at Queen's on an exchange program or on a Letter of Permission and the departure is categorized as Level II, or if the student is in a collaborative degree program offered jointly with another post-secondary institution (the "partner institution"), that the student's home university or the partner institution, as applicable, will be notified of the finding and remedy or sanction if the finding is confirmed after all avenues of appeal have expired or been exhausted (see section 3.6).

### **3.1.7 Procedures with Respect to Exchange, Letter of Permission and Collaborative Students**

#### **3.1.7.1 non-degree Students from Other Post-Secondary Institutions**

After a finding of a Level II departure from academic integrity by a student who is studying at Queen's on an official exchange program or as a visiting student on a Letter of Permission, when all avenues of appeal have expired or been exhausted and if the finding is confirmed, the SGSPA AI Administrator shall forward a copy of the Finding form to the student's home university Faculty or Program Office.

#### **3.1.7.2 Students Registered in Collaborative Programs with Other Post-Secondary Institutions**

After a finding of a departure from academic integrity by a Queen's student who is registered in a collaborative degree program offered jointly with another post-secondary institution (the "partner institution"), when all avenues of appeal have expired or been exhausted and if the finding is confirmed, the SGSPA AI Administrator will forward a copy of the Finding form to the partner institution.

#### **3.1.7.3 Queen's Students Attending Other Post-Secondary Institutions**

Information received about a finding of a departure from academic integrity by a Queen's student who is studying on an official exchange program or at another post-secondary institution on a Letter of Permission, or who is registered in a collaborative degree program offered jointly with a partner institution, shall be disclosed to the student's home SGSPA or other Faculty/School. The severity of any departure shall be assessed by the SGSPA Associate Dean as the equivalent of a Level I or a Level II departure and a record of the departure shall be retained in the appropriate file in the SGSPA Office.

Any finding of a departure from academic integrity at a partner institution shall not result in the imposition of any further remedy or sanction. However, it shall be taken into consideration as if the finding was made under these Procedures if there is a subsequent finding of a departure from academic integrity by the student at Queen's.

### **3.1.8 Retention of Documents and Records**

All original documents related to an academic integrity investigation, including the submitted work, correspondence, a written response from the student, and the Notice of Investigation and Finding forms, must be forwarded to the SGSPA AI Administrator to be filed, maintained and released as required under the Procedures.

No documents or materials may be retained by the instructor or in a departmental student file.

### **3.2 Academic Integrity Investigation related to non-coursework graduate degree requirements, such as the comprehensive examination (or equivalent)**

Where possible departures from academic integrity in the comprehensive examination (or equivalent) or any other non-coursework degree requirement are identified, the faculty member(s) responsible for administering the comprehensive examination (or equivalent) or other non-coursework degree requirement) shall

- Conduct a review of the documents (as per 3.1.1)
- If there is sufficient evidence to continue with the investigation of a possible departure from academic integrity, engage with the Student (as per 3.1.2)
- Decide on a finding, or decide on dismissal (as per 3.1.3)
- Decide on the Remedy(ies) or Sanction(s) (as per 3.1.4)
- Decide to refer the case to the SGSPA (as per 3.1.5)
- Inform the student (as per 3.1.6)

If possible departures from academic integrity in the comprehensive examination (or equivalent) or any other non-coursework degree requirement are identified while a Queen's student is attending another post-secondary

university, the Queen's faculty member(s) responsible shall proceed as per 3.1.7.

The responsible faculty member(s) shall follow 3.1.8 with regard to retention of documents and records.

### **3.3 Academic Integrity Investigation related to Master's Essay, Master's Thesis, and Doctoral Dissertation**

Where possible departures from academic and/or research integrity for the research conducted for the essay, thesis or dissertation, and/or in the essay, thesis or dissertation document itself, are identified, the SGSPA Associate Dean shall be contacted immediately. The person(s) raising the issue(s) shall outline the particular concerns and the SGSPA Associate Dean shall assume the responsibility for proceeding with the case.

The SGSPA Associate Dean shall contact the student's primary supervisor immediately. The supervisor shall be responsible for an initial review of the data, document and/or sections of the document in question, to determine if sufficient evidence exists to warrant an investigation.

In the case of an investigation the SGSPA Associate Dean will

- engage with the Student ( as per 3.1.2)
- Decide on a finding, or decide on dismissal (as per 3.1.3)
- Decide on the Remedy(ies) or Sanction(s) (as per 3.1.5.1)

The SGSPA Associate Dean may impose any of the following sanctions:

- an official written warning that the penalty for a subsequent offence could be a requirement to withdraw from the University for a specified minimum period of time;
- the rescinding of University- or Faculty-awarded scholarships, prizes and/or bursaries;
- a requirement to withdraw from the University for a specified minimum period of time; OR
- recommending to the SGS AAB the revocation or rescinding of a degree

When the SGSPA Associate Dean determines that a requirement to withdraw from the University or the revocation or rescinding of a degree is the appropriate sanction, the SGSPA Associate Dean must consult with the Chair of the Academic Integrity Subcommittee to ensure that such sanctions are imposed consistently across the University.

If the Chair of the Academic Integrity Subcommittee is satisfied that the proposed sanction is in accordance with University standards, the Associate Dean shall notify the

student in writing of the sanction and include the reasons for the decision (see section 3.1.6).

Following the deadline to appeal the sanction, or after all avenues of appeal have been exhausted and the requirement to withdraw or revocation or rescinding of a degree is confirmed, the SGSPA shall forward the requirement to withdraw from the University, or the rescinding of the degree, to:

- the Office of the University Registrar for the notation to be added to the student's transcript; and
- the University Secretariat, who will notify the student of the final decision.

If the Chair of the Academic Integrity Subcommittee is not satisfied that the proposed sanction is in accordance with University standards, the SGSPA Associate Dean shall reconsider and adjust the proposed sanction.

## **4. Appeals**

A student may appeal a finding of a departure from academic integrity, or the imposition of a remedy or sanction, or both.

### **4.1 Grounds for Appeal**

The grounds for submitting an appeal are limited to cases in which:

i. The decision-maker whose decision is being appealed failed to act in accordance with the rules of procedural fairness. A breach of procedural fairness includes failing to:

- permit a student to be heard by an unbiased decision-maker;
- follow applicable rules, regulations, or University policy, in a way that adversely affected a student's right to a fair process;
- make a reasonable decision. A "reasonable" decision is one that is rational in that its findings are based on evidence, thought out and supported by facts and logical inferences from findings of fact. To be reasonable, the decision must contain adequate reasons for the conclusions. A decision should not be overturned if it falls within a range of possible, acceptable outcomes. If the decision is "reasonable", the decision-maker deciding the appeal is not permitted to substitute their opinion for that of the decision-maker whose decision is under appeal.

ii. The decision-maker whose decision is being appealed acted without, or exceeded their, jurisdiction.

### **4.2. Levels of Appeal**



The SGSPA regulation covering appeals of academic integrity findings or sanctions or both, is as follows in section 4.3.

Note that in addition to the level(s) of appeal listed below, the Senate *Student Academic Appeals Policy* establishes the University Student Appeal Board ("the USAB"), with jurisdiction to hear appeals of the final academic integrity decision made within the SGSPA.

If the instructor or faculty member(s) responsible referred the case to the SGSPA Associate Dean for decision (section 3.1.5), the appeal is made directly to the Academic Appeal Board of the SGSPA (see below).

Appeal of academic integrity findings or sanctions or both, with regard to the Master's Essay, Master's Thesis, or Ph.D./ D.Sc. Dissertation, is made directly to the Academic Appeal Board of the SGSPA (see below).

A student may not withdraw from the graduate degree program while the appeal of an academic integrity finding(s) and/or sanction(s) is underway.

### **4.3 First Level of Appeal to the Program/Department Head**

#### **4.3.1. Initial Review by the Program/Department Head**

The appeal of a finding of a departure from academic integrity, or the imposition of a remedy or sanction, or both, by course instructor OR by the faculty member(s) responsible for administering the comprehensive examination (or equivalent) or other non- coursework degree requirement) to the Program/Department Head.

Appeals must be submitted to the Program/Department Head within 10 business days of the date that the Finding form was emailed to the student by the instructor.

The student's appeal submission must clearly state whether the student is appealing the finding, the remedy or sanction, or both. The student must explain the reason(s) for their appeal, based on one or more of the Grounds for Appeal set out in section 4.1. The submission must include the Finding form, the remedy or sanction decision (if separate from the Finding form) and any other documents necessary to establish the grounds for the appeal.

If the student does not wish to meet with the appeal decision-maker and the instructor, the student must so indicate in their appeal submission, and the appeal shall then proceed based on the written submissions.

The Program/Department Head shall review the student's appeal submission and determine if it contains new evidence that, through no fault or omission of the student, was not

known by or available to the student when the prior decision was made. No other new evidence shall be permitted.

#### **4.3.1.1. Appeal Contains New Permitted Evidence**

If a student's appeal contains new evidence that is permitted, the Program/Department Head shall have no jurisdiction over the appeal and shall send the matter back to the previous decision-maker(s) for reconsideration, unless:

1. the delay of sending the matter to the prior decision-maker would be unduly prejudicial to the student; or
2. the student's new evidence clearly demonstrates bias in the prior proceeding that otherwise cannot be remedied.

#### **4.3.1.2. Appeal Contains No New Evidence**

If the student's appeal contains no new or permitted evidence, the Program/Department Head shall provide the previous decision-maker(s) with a copy of the student's appeal submission and the previous decision-maker(s) shall have an opportunity to provide a written response to the student's appeal within 10 business days.

The student must be provided with any response material from the previous decision-maker(s). The student shall have at least 5 business days to review this material before a meeting is held, or, if the student indicated that they do not want to meet, they shall have 5 business days after receiving the previous decision-maker(s) response material to make additional written submissions to the Program/Department Head.

#### **4.3.2 Meeting with the Student**

In most cases the Program/Department Head will convene a meeting with the student, the instructor, and any witnesses, to conduct a thorough review of the evidence.

If a meeting will be held, the Program/Department Head shall schedule it as soon as reasonably possible. The student and the previous decision-maker(s) may have a support person (see section 3.1.2.3) or an advisor present at the meeting.

The Program/Department Head shall ask who, if anyone, will be present with the student, and advise the student whether anyone will be present with the instructor. The Program/Department Head shall also advise the student what material will be considered at the meeting.

The student and the previous decision-maker(s) shall have the opportunity to respond to the evidence orally at the meeting.

#### **4.3.3 Deciding the Appeal**



After a careful review of the evidence, the Program/Department Head can:

- a. maintain or overturn the previous decision-maker(s)' finding, if the student appealed the finding; and/or
- b. maintain or modify the remedy or sanction, if the student appealed the remedy or sanction.

#### **4.3.4 Informing the Student and the Instructor**

Within 20 business days of the date upon which the appeal is considered complete, the Program/Department Head must provide the student with a written decision, which shall include:

- a statement of the issues under review;
- a summary of the arguments and evidence presented;
- whether the finding will be maintained or overturned and/or whether the remedy or sanction will be maintained or modified;
- the reasons for the decision;
- if necessary, a statement of how the decision will be implemented;
- the student's right to appeal the decision, with an explanation of the next level of appeal and information or resources to consult about the process for filing an appeal; and
- the information on the website of the Office of the University Ombudsperson about student rights and responsibilities and University policies and procedures.

The Program/Department Head shall also inform the previous decision-maker(s) of the outcome of the appeal and provide them with a copy of the decision.

All relevant documents related to the appeal, including the submitted work, correspondence, the Notice of Investigation and Finding forms, and the decision, must be forwarded to the SGSPA AI Administrator to be placed in the appropriate file, and maintained and released in accordance with these Procedures.

#### **4.4. Second Level of Appeal to the SGSPA Associate Dean**

In making decisions, the SGSPA Associate Dean should recognize that primary responsibility for making decisions about individual students rests with those who are closest to them, who can fairly compare students to other students in similar positions, and who have knowledge of the context in which the decision is made. As such, the judgment of previous decision-maker(s) regarding the appropriate remedy or sanction should be respected by the SGSPA Associate Dean unless the remedy or sanction is unreasonable in the circumstances.

#### **4.5. Third Level of Appeal to the Academic Appeal Board of the SGSPA**

Any appeal of academic integrity finding(s) or sanction(s) or both, made by the SGSPA Associate Dean, or of second level appeal decision(s) made by the SGSPA Associate Dean, is made directly to the Academic Appeal Board of the SGSPA (the AAB).

Within 10 business days of receiving the written appeal decision, the student may ask the Secretary of the AAB to convene the AAB to hear their appeal. The student must submit a written statement of appeal within 10 business days of such a request to the Secretary of the AAB, attaching all relevant documentation regarding the case and the finding(s) and sanction(s).

The Secretary of the AAB shall inform the SGSPA Associate Dean of the request for a hearing by the AAB, and give a copy of the student's written statement to the SGSPA Associate Dean. The SGSPA Associate Dean is the respondent in this case and shall be given the opportunity to provide a written response to the student's appeal, to be submitted to the AAB within 10 business days of receiving notice of the request for a hearing.

The Secretary of the AAB shall distribute the student's statement and any written response to the members of the AAB. Within 10 business days of receiving this statement, the AAB shall convene to review the written material. The AAB shall, within two further weeks (10 business days), meet with all the parties to the appeal. The student may be accompanied by a University Dispute Resolution Advisor or other support person. The student must notify the Secretary of the AAB at least 48 hours prior to the meeting if he or she is to be legally represented.

Under normal circumstances, it is anticipated that the appeal can be heard in its entirety at this meeting and that the AAB shall issue its report within a further two weeks (10 business days).

##### **4.5.1 Disposition of the Appeal of Academic Integrity matters**

Upon completing its review, the Academic Appeal Board may make one or more of the following dispositions:

- Uphold the finding: If, after an investigation of the evidence and the review to date, and consideration of the response by the student, the AAB determines that there is sufficient and persuasive evidence on which to make a finding of departure from academic integrity, the Academic Appeal Board will uphold the finding. The AAB shall notify the student in writing of this decision.



- Rule on the sanction(s) imposed to date: In cases where the AAB upholds the finding of a departure from academic integrity, it shall also evaluate the sanction(s) previously determined, and has the authority to either uphold that sanction, or determine one or more alternate sanctions from Sections 3.1.4.4 and 3.1.5 above. The AAB shall notify the student in writing of this decision.
- Make recommendations on policy, procedures or principles to the SGSPA: If the AAB, in hearing a case, identifies matters of policy, procedure or principle that have broad implications for the SGSPA, it should draw these to the attention of the Dean of the SGSPA.

The decision of the AAB shall be final and shall be the final appeal through the SGSPA. The student may appeal the decision of the AAB to the University Senate Appeal Board.

#### **4.6 Appeal of SGSPA Decisions to the University Student Appeal Board**

A student may appeal the final appeal decision from the SGSPA Associate Dean or AAB to the University Student Appeal Board ("the USAB"). The student may appeal a decision related to a finding of a departure from academic integrity, a remedy or sanction, or both.

##### **4.6.1. Submission of the Appeal**

Appeals must be submitted to the USAB within two weeks after the date that the last decision of the SGSPA Associate Dean or AAB was emailed to the student. During exam or holiday periods the Chair of the USAB will normally grant an extension of time for filing an appeal but only if the student submitted a written extension request to the Chair of the USAB within the original time limit for filing an appeal.

The student may appeal to the USAB based on one or more of the Grounds for Appeal to USAB stipulated in the **Senate Student Academic Appeals Policy**. The student must follow the *Starting an Appeal* procedure set out in the **Rules of Procedure for the University Student Appeal Board** (<https://www.queensu.ca/secretariat/rules-procedure-usab-0/>).

The Office of the University Ombudsperson can provide guidance to the student with respect to the appeal process for the USAB.

The instructor or appeal decision-maker may consult with the University's Legal Counsel about responding to an appeal to the USAB.

#### **5. Cross-Faculty Jurisdiction in academic integrity matters involving a course**

If a student is enrolled in a course that is offered by a Faculty/School (the "course Faculty") that is not the same as the Faculty/School in which the student is registered (the "home Faculty"), instructors and Faculties/Schools shall follow the procedures defined in **Senate Academic Integrity Procedures – Requirements for Faculties and Schools Section 5**.