

MD Program

Student Complaints Policy

Student Conduct Component: Policy #SC-05 v3

Supersedes: Policy #SC-05 v2

Lead Writer: unknown

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Preamble

- 1.1. Both faculty and students within the School of Medicine are guided by standards of conduct that reflect the values of the profession of Medicine and which are outlined in the following documents.
 - 1.1.1. The CMA code of Ethics (<https://policybase.cma.ca/viewer?file=%2Fmedia%2FPolicyPDF%2FPD19-03.pdf#page=1>) which emphasizes such things as standard of care, medical research and, in particular, personal conduct, integrity, honesty and morality
 - 1.1.2. The Queen's University Code of Conduct (https://www.queensu.ca/secretariat/sites/uslcwww/files/uploaded_files/policies/board/StudentCodeOfConduct.pdf) that describes acceptable conduct as "does not infringe on the rights of other members of the University community and conforms to the regulations of the University and its subordinate jurisdictions and to the law of the land" and lists examples of unacceptable conduct.
 - 1.1.3. The Queen's University Harassment/Discrimination Complaint Policy and Procedure (<https://www.queensu.ca/secretariat/harassment-and-discrimination-prevention-and-response-policy>) which describes Harassment, Sexual Harassment, race and racism, heterosexualism, and transphobia as well as the University procedures for reporting and dealing with infringements.
 - 1.1.4. The Queen's University and the Kingston General Teaching Hospitals Code for the Ethical Conduct of Clinical Teaching Encounters which describes acceptable Teacher-Student interactions in the clinical setting.

- 1.1.5. Faculty of Health Sciences Code of Ethical Conduct for Clinical Teachers. Students who encounter situations in which they observe or are the subject of practices which deviate from these standards require processes for reporting that ensure their confidentiality and protection from any academic or professional repercussions. Students should always feel free to contact trusted members of faculty for advice or direction. This document outlines a process intended to ensure that such processes are available and that students are aware of them.

2.0 First Contact Option

Students with such concerns have the following options available to them:

- The student should contact the Assistant Dean of Student Affairs or delegate. The terms of reference of this position are appended to this policy. Contact information is widely distributed throughout the student body.
- Discussion with the Associate Dean, MD Program.
- In addition to the Director of Student Affairs, students may contact:
 - The University Coordinator of Dispute Resolution (533-6095)
 - The Human Rights Office (<http://www.queensu.ca/humanrights/>)
 - Queen's Student Accessibility Services (QSAS) (<https://www.queensu.ca/studentwellness/accessibility-services>)
 - KHSC Medical & Academic Affairs or People Services KHSC (613)549-6666 (4205)
 - Providence Care Medical Affairs: 613-544-4900 x 53370

In all such discussions those faculty members contacted are bound by the following principles:

- Strict confidentiality.
- Student safety.
- The provision of any emergency services the student may require. The first contact party will endeavor to resolve the situation if possible. These options should be discussed with the student bringing the complaint and could entail any of the following:
 - informal discussions with other faculty members, students or house staff

- notification of the Assistant Dean of Academic Affairs
- recording the details of the issue with the intent of disclosing at some future date, to protect the interests of the student

The student can also contact the Chief of Medical and Academic Affairs at Kingston Health Sciences Center or the Executive director of Medical Affairs Director of Medical Administration at Providence Care Hospital with concerns. Once a complaint is brought forward to one of these Directors, it must be investigated in accordance with the Health and Safety Act and the policies of the associated institution. Anonymous complaints submitted through the Elentra portal which refer to a specific hospital will be shared with the appropriate Director for their awareness. If multiple anonymous complaints are submitted through the Elentra portal that refer to the same issue, an investigation will be made by the relevant Director.

If the student and first contact party do not feel that appropriate resolution can be achieved the following formal complaint process can be initiated.

3.0 Formal Complaint Process

- 3.1. A formal complaint consists of a written submission outlining the incident in detail with references to deviations from accepted standards of conduct.
- 3.2. This document will be submitted to the Dean or Senior Associate Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences who will review it in confidence and establish a review panel which will consist of at least two members of faculty who are sufficiently removed from the incident and individuals involved, and any other individuals that the Dean or Associate Dean feel appropriate given the specific circumstances of the complaint. That panel will review the incident in confidence and interview appropriate parties. That panel will make recommendations back to the Dean for appropriate action.

4.0 Dissemination of this Policy

This policy will be published in the School of Medicine Calendar and distributed to all medical students and faculty at least annually.

5.0 Code for the Ethical Conduct of Clinical Teaching Encounters

- 5.1. Any use of a patient for teaching purposes should take place only with the consent of that patient.

- 5.1.1. Where medical students form part of the health care team and are engaged in providing health care for patients, then the usual institutional consent process will apply, and specific additional consent is not required.
- 5.1.2. Where the contact between the student and the patient is primarily for teaching purposes, then explicit prior consent must be obtained from the patient.
- 5.1.3. Verbal consent will normally suffice. Where the patient is, or will be, incapable of giving consent at the time of the encounter, and the encounter will include a procedure or examination of an embarrassing or invasive nature, then prior consent should be documented.
- 5.1.4. Clinical teachers who ask that medical students perform procedures or examinations on patients who are incapable of giving informed consent, purely for the purposes of education, should ensure that the students understand that either the patient has given prior consent, or that consent has been given by an appropriate surrogate.
- 5.2. The institutions must ensure that systems are in place so that all patients, including those in the ambulatory setting, are educated about the roles within their health care teams, including specific reference to medical students, to enable them to make informed decisions about the teaching process.
- 5.3. All clinical staff have a duty to inform patients of the role of students on their team; students must always be accurately identified as such.
- 5.4. Clinical teachers must not ask students to assume a task or responsibility beyond their competence without adequate instruction and supervision. The onus is on teachers to assure themselves of a student's competence, but students have a responsibility to inform teachers if they are not competent to carry out a task.
- 5.5. Medical students should not be used to obtain written consent from patients, but they may witness signatures.
- 5.6. All members of the clinical team have a responsibility to ensure that these guidelines are followed. The final onus rests with clinical teachers.
- 5.7. The ethical clinical teacher:
 - Will treat students with respect regardless of level of training, race, creed, colour, gender, sexual orientation, or field of study.

- Will teach the knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviour, and provide the experience that the student requires to become a physician in his/her chosen career.
- Will supervise students at all levels of training as appropriate to their knowledge, skills and experience.
- Will support and encourage students in their endeavors to learn and to develop their skills and attitudes and a sense of enquiry.
- Will allow responsibility commensurate with ability.
- Will see patients when so requested by students.
- Will teach to students the rationale for decisions, the reasons for conclusions, the reasoning behind investigation and treatment.
- Will discuss alternate diagnoses, investigations and therapeutic choices and the merits and risks of these.
- Will assess carefully and accurately students' abilities and provide prompt verbal and written feedback.
- Will assess only performance and not allow this assessment to be coloured by personal interactions.
- Will provide remedial teaching when so indicated by assessment.
- Will maintain a professional teacher-student relationship at all times and avoid the development of emotional, sexual, financial or other relationships with students.
- Will strive to conduct herself/himself in a fashion to be an excellent role model for students.
- Will refrain from addressing students in a disparaging fashion.
- Will refrain from intimidating or attempting to intimidate students.
- Will refrain from harassment of students in any fashion – emotional, physical or sexual.

ASSISTANT DEAN, STUDENT AFFAIRS

Position Summary

Reporting to the Associate Dean, Undergraduate Medical Education and liaising with and supporting all sectors of the educational continuum in the School of Medicine, the Assistant Dean, Academic Affairs is responsible for all policy, processes and curriculum relating to the support of students within the Undergraduate Medical Education Program, a four year program leading to the MD Degree, including personal, wellness, career and academic counselling.

Key Responsibilities

- In consultation with the Associate Dean, ensures appropriate policies and procedures are in place that ensure and guide:
 - Processes by which students seek and receive support for health and personal concerns
 - Support and counselling for students experiencing academic difficulties.
 - Student education and personal counselling with respect to career choice and application to postgraduate programs.
 - Student engagement of necessary accommodations
- Ensures such policies and procedures are transparent and understood by all students and faculty.
- Ensures processes are in place to ensure appropriate student confidentiality in reporting personal concerns.
- In consultation with the Associate Dean UGME, directs the faculty assignments, workflow and work processes to meet Student Affairs objectives and timelines
- Is a member of the MD Program Executive Committee
- Oversees the direction and supervision of UGME staff involved in all aspects of the Student Affairs portfolio.
- Consults with the Associate Dean, UGME regarding reporting of student academic and professionalism issues in the Medical Student Progress Report (MSPR).
- Assists the Associate Dean, UGME in assuring continued accreditation by CACMS by creating protocols, procedures, documents and materials to achieve that goal

- Assists the Associate Dean in strategic planning of the MD program.
- Is available to substitute for the Associate Dean or assume delegated responsibilities as may be required.

Support & Commitment

The anticipated time commitment will be 1.5 day per week (30% time commitment).

The Assistant Dean, Student Affairs is supported by the Office of Student Affairs.

Term of Appointment

The term of the appointment is five years, renewable upon review.