



MD Program

Academic Integrity Policy

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1 Introduction

The MD Policy on Academic Integrity is adapted from the Senate Policy on Academic Integrity Procedures – Requirements of Faculties and Schools. Students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with and adhering to all university policies and regulations concerning academic integrity.

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- affirm the MD Program's dedication to academic integrity and the seriousness with which it treats departures;
- protect the academic integrity of the MD Program and Queen's 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

1.2 Jurisdiction

In most cases, the Course Director is considered the Instructor of record for courses in the MD Program. Academic Integrity (AI) concerns within a course shall be first dealt with by the Course Director responsible for the course. If the Course Director believes the matter is of particularly serious or complex nature, they will refer it to the Associate Dean of the MD Program who will function as the MD Program Academic Integrity Administrator. Departures from academic Integrity, may also be considered a matter of professionalism and will be managed in accordance with the MD Program Professionalism Policy.

2 Departures from Academic Integrity

Departures from academic integrity include, but are not limited to:

- i) Plagiarism (presenting another's ideas or phrasings as one's own without proper acknowledgement) such as copying and pasting from any source without proper acknowledgement; copying from another student; using direct quotations or large sections of paraphrased material in an assignment without appropriate acknowledgement; submitting the same piece of work in more than one course without the permission of the instructor(s).
- ii) Contract Cheating such as outsourcing academic work to pay-for-profit websites or others and submitting the work as the student's own. Examples. Purchasing a term paper or assignment, hiring an exam impersonator.
- iii) Use of Unauthorized Materials such as possessing or using unauthorized study materials or aids during a test; copying from another's test paper; using unauthorized calculator or other aids during a test; unauthorized removal of materials from the library, or deliberate concealment of library materials.
- iv) Facilitation (enabling another's breach of academic integrity) such as making information available to another student; knowingly allowing one's essay or assignment to be copied by someone else; buying or selling of term papers or assignments and submitting them as one's own for the purpose of plagiarism.
- v) Forgery (submitting counterfeit documents or statements) such as creating a transcript or other official document.

- vi) Falsification (misrepresentation of one's self, one's work or one's relation to the University) such as altering transcripts or other official documents relating to student records; impersonating someone in an examination or test; submitting a take home examination written, in whole or in part, by someone else; fabricating or falsifying laboratory or research data.
- vii) Unauthorized use of Intellectual Property (use of intellectual property of others for sale or profit or distribution for unfair academic, personal or professional advantage without the authorization of the owner of the material) such as uploading course materials to note sharing websites without the instructor's permission; student providing course materials to commercial study prep services that have not been sanctioned by the University.
- viii) Unauthorized Collaboration (working with others without the specific permission of the instructor on academic work that will be submitted for a grade) such as working with others on in class or take-home assessment.
- ix) Unauthorized use of Generative AI tools
- x) Breach of Privacy/Confidentiality (sharing a person's confidential information) such as speaking about a patient after a course is completed, forwarding an email/attachment from a professor to another student (or on social media) without permission.
- xi) Failure to Abide by Academic Rules such as failing to follow rules imposed by course instructors/ directors/ MD program in the writing of tests or assignments, failure to comply with assigned remediation or sanctions resulting from a departure from academic integrity.

3 Procedural Fairness

Proceedings must respect the rights and ensure the fair treatment of students and meet the standards of procedural fairness.

The Procedures are to be applied flexibly, in a manner and with the degree of formality appropriate in an educational environment and commensurate with the seriousness of the case itself.

3.1 The student must:

- know the nature of any allegations and the basis and evidence for them;
- have a meaningful opportunity to present a response in writing or in person; and
- have an opportunity to appeal when appropriate.

3.2 The decision-maker must:

- be free from bias or the reasonable apprehension of bias;
- make and communicate decisions in writing in a timely way; and
- provide clear reasons for decisions, based on evidence and consistent with all academic policies and regulations.

3.3 “Decision-makers” include all those responsible under these Procedures for:

- deciding whether a departure from academic integrity occurred;
- deciding on a remedy or sanction; and
- deciding an appeal.

4 Investigation

4.1 Delegation of Investigation

In most cases, the Course Director investigates a possible departure from academic integrity and decides if the evidence supports a possible departure of academic integrity. The Course Director may consult with the Associate Dean MD program during their initial investigation. If a Course Director is unable to investigate for any reason, the Associate Dean MD program will take over the investigation. The Associate Dean MD Program may enlist additional investigative resources if deemed necessary.

4.2 Initial Collection of Evidence

To begin investigating a possible departure from academic integrity, the Course Director 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(s), other university personnel and the student relating to the work;
- Documents alleged to be altered; and
- Documents stating policies on departures from academic integrity.

4.3 Notification to the Associate Dean MD Program.

When a course director has sufficient evidence to indicate there has been a breach of Academic Integrity, they will submit all their evidence to the Associate Dean MD program who is the Program Academic Integrity Administrator who will take over all subsequent processes. The Course Director will not retain any documentation. If new evidence arises at a later date, the Course Director will submit that evidence to the Associate Dean and will not retain any new documentation.

5 Engaging with the Student

5.1 Notification by the Associate Dean

After reviewing the documentation from the Course Director, the Associate Dean will determine if additional investigation is necessary and may enlist additional investigative resources if deemed necessary. Once the Associate Dean determines that there is sufficient evidence to continue with the investigation of a possible departure from academic integrity, the Associate Dean must use the “Notice of Investigation of a Possible Departure from Academic Integrity” form (“the NOI”) to notify the student of the alleged departure.

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 Course Director will rely;
- The possible remedies and sanctions as outlined below;
- The student’s right to respond to the investigation by meeting with the Associate Dean or by providing a written response;
- The student’s right to have representation in any response to the investigation.
- The School resources available to the student for support and consultation
- 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 Course Director or other university staff to aid in the investigation except as required to permit the student to understand and respond to the allegations.

5.2 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 Associate Dean or their election to provide a written response.

5.3 Meeting with the Student

If the student elects to meet with the Associate Dean

The Associate Dean:

- will determine whether the meeting will be in person, by telephone, or by video/audio conference.
- will ask who, if anyone, will be present at the meeting with the student.
- will schedule a meeting as soon as possible.
- may have an advisor present; for example, the MD Program Assistant Dean Curriculum or their delegate.

The Student:

- has the right to know what material will be considered
- will have the opportunity to respond to the evidence related to the alleged departure at the meeting.
- is required to bring to the meeting copies of all documents on which they intend to rely in responding to the alleged departure.
- may have a support person present, who may be a friend or family member, or an advisor to provide emotional support and assistance. Except for legal counsel, 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.

5.4 Written Response from the Student

If the student does not wish to meet, the student may submit a written response to the Associate Dean no later than 5 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

5.5 Final Investigation Steps

If the Associate Dean receives new information about the alleged departure before issuing a finding, the Associate Dean must disclose that information to the student and give them the option to respond to it, by way of a written submission to the Associate Dean 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 decide based on the available evidence.

6 Finding of Investigation

6.1 It is the responsibility of the Associate Dean MD Program to determine the finding of the investigation. The Associate Dean will decide if there is enough evidence to support 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.

6.2 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 Associate Dean MD Program 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 Associate Dean must complete a Finding of a Departure from Academic Integrity form (“the Finding form”) to inform the student that the investigation has resulted in a finding of a departure of Academic Integrity.

6.3 Dismissal

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

7 Categorizing the Level of Departure of Academic Integrity

The responsibility of categorizing the level of departure of Academic Integrity lies with the Associate Dean MD Program. In deciding an appropriate remedy or sanction, the Associate Dean will distinguish between minor (Level I) and major (Level II) departures from academic integrity. Records of Level I findings are maintained by the MD Program Associate Dean if there is a future finding of a departure by the same student. Records of Level II findings form part of the student’s Official File in the MD Program and are retained for 10 years after the student’s graduation.

This practice of separating a Level I departure from the student's Official File balances remediation and sanctions. 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.

7.1 Level I Considerations

- This is the first finding of a departure from academic integrity by the student;
- The extent of departure is deemed to be minor
- Prompt admission to the alleged departure from academic integrity by the student and expression of contrition and willingness to undertake educative remedies
- The departure is related to academic work that does not count for a significant proportion of the course grade;
- There are significant mitigating circumstances provided by the student. An example is 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;

7.2 Level II Considerations

- There is a record of a previous departure(s) from academic integrity by the student;
- The departure is related to academic work that counts for a significant proportion of the course grade;
- Evidence of a deliberate attempt to gain advantage;
- Evidence of an active attempt to conceal the departure;
- Conduct that intimidates others or provokes misconduct by others;
- Direct harm to another student or to the University;
- The incident involves more than 1 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).

8 Remedies and Sanctions

The remedy or sanction should reflect the extent and gravity of the departure from academic integrity and should be consistent with the categorized level of departure.

Level 1 Academic Integrity Departures

The Associate Dean MD program may impose one or more of a range of remedies or sanctions including but not limited to,

- A written warning that such infractions constitute unacceptable behavior;
- 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 in the course.

Level 2 Academic Integrity Departures

The Associate Dean MD Program will report level 2 academic integrity departures to the MD Program Professionalism Committee for deliberation who may recommend more significant sanctions including but not limited to.

- Requirement to repeat a year of study in the MD Program
- Requirement to withdraw from the MD Program
- Rescinding of the MD degree.
- Notification on the Medical Student Performance Record (MSPR) submitted to the post graduate resident matching process.

The MD Program Professionalism Committee will make their recommendations to the Associate Dean who will make the final decision on imposed sanctions

The Associate Dean will also consult with the Queen's Chair of the Academic Integrity Subcommittee if withdrawal from the MD Program or rescinding of the MD degree is deemed necessary.

9 Requirement to Withdraw from the MD Program or the Rescinding of the Degree

When the Associate Dean MD Program determines that a requirement to withdraw from the MD Program or the rescinding of a degree is the appropriate, the Associate Dean shall notify the student in writing of the sanction and include the reasons for the decision. Following the deadline to appeal the sanction, or after all avenues of appeal have been exhausted and the requirement to withdraw or rescinding of a degree is confirmed, the Associate Dean MD Program shall forward the requirement to withdraw from the MD

Program 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.

10 Informing the Student of the Final Decision of a Departure of Academic Integrity and Remediation and or Sanctions

10.1 - Finding and Remedy or Sanction

The Associate Dean MD Program will 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 Faculty of Health Sciences Student Appeal Board
- The deadline for appealing to the Faculty of Health Sciences Student Appeal Board
- The MD Program resources available
- The link to the Office of the University Ombudsperson for the student to have the opportunity to consult them about student rights and responsibilities and University policies and procedures.

11 Appeals

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

11.1 First Level of Appeal

A student may appeal the finding of a departure from academic integrity, the remedy or sanction, or both, to the Faculty of Health Sciences Student Appeal Board.

The appeal must be submitted to the Chair of the Faculty of Health Sciences Student Appeal Board within 10 business days of the date that the Finding form was emailed to the student by the Associate Dean MD Program.

11.2 Second Level of Appeal to the University Student Appeal Board

A student may appeal the final appeal decision from the Faculty of Health Sciences Student Appeal Board 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.

12 Confidentiality

The identity of a student may only be disclosed to others when allowed by the student or required under this policy. The Instructor/Course Director must reasonably safeguard the student’s identity throughout the initial investigation.

The student under investigation must not receive any documentation related to the investigation that contains information related to another student, unless such information is necessary for the student to understand and meaningfully respond to an allegation. If information related to another student is necessary for this purpose, the Associate Dean MD program must ensure that appropriate privacy safeguards are in place prior to distributing the information.

Records of proceedings and their outcomes may only be created, compiled or retained as required under this policy.

13 Records

The MD Program maintains records of investigations and outcomes of academic integrity concerns in student files according to the MD Program Records Policy

14 Annual Reports

The MD Program will report annually to the Academic Integrity Subcommittee on the number and type of academic integrity matters in the MD Program and their outcomes, using the MD Program Annual Academic Integrity Report form.

The Academic Integrity Subcommittee will make an annual report to Senate based on the MD Program annual reports.

15 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. When an investigation is initiated during a student's final year of study or involves a course required to graduate, the MD Program will 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.