

## Faculty of Engineering and Computer Science

### Academic Integrity Investigations Procedure – Undergraduate

*Please note that updates to the UVic Policy on Academic Integrity are expected in 2025 – at the time the updates take effect, the UVic Policy on Academic Integrity will take precedence and this document will be updated to complement the Policy.*

#### Stage 1: Instructor Investigation

**The Instructor determines whether to report a suspected violation of the Policy on Academic Integrity to the Chair, Director, or delegate.**

1. Grade the work and record the grade as normal under a presumption of innocence. If there is a conclusion that a violation has occurred, the grade can be changed at that time according to the assigned penalty. **In no case should an N grade be entered as a placeholder final grade while awaiting the Chair/Director/delegate or Associate Dean's decision.** N grades indicate required work was not submitted and opens the possibility for the student to request a range of academic concessions. In extreme cases, an N grade on record may provide grounds for a student to withdraw from the course.
2. Review the [Policy on Academic Integrity](#).
3. Articulate to yourself what makes you suspect a violation. Note what it is about the work or situation that has raised the suspicion.
4. Look for evidence that can confirm or disconfirm whether a violation has occurred.
  - a. If the evidence you find is ambiguous, go back to your initial reasons for suspecting a violation. Do the features of the work that led you to believe that there may be a violation still lead you to that conclusion?
5. Determine whether to report or not.
  - a. **No violation suspected:** If after further investigation you no longer believe that a violation has occurred, do not report that you suspected a violation. The investigation ends here.
  - b. **Violation suspected or unsure:** If you suspect a violation or if you are unsure, contact the Chair/Director/delegate and report your findings.
    - i. Provide the Chair/Director/delegate with the evidence you have gathered and any notes you have taken during the process. As applicable, include any written instructions or syllabus rules that clarify the boundary that the student's work is suspected to have transgressed.
    - ii. If you believe that another explanation may be plausible (for example, that the student has misunderstood proper citation practice so that what you are looking at is poor scholarship rather than plagiarism), let the Chair/Director/delegate know.
    - iii. The Chair/Director/delegate will continue the investigation in Stage 2. Participate in a meeting with the student only as requested by the Chair/Director/delegate. These interactions may be in person, over video conferencing, or in writing.



## Stage 2: Chair, Director, or Delegate Investigation

The Chair, Director, or Academic Integrity delegate of the unit determines whether there has been a violation of the Policy on Academic Integrity.

*If the Instructor is also the Chair/Director/delegate of the unit, an alternate must be designated to perform the Chair/Director/delegate's functions. This may be another Chair/Director/delegate, or it may be the Associate Dean Undergraduate Programs.*

1. Review the pertinent sections in the [Policy on Academic Integrity](#).
2. Review the Instructor's report, including the evidence and notes that have been provided.
3. Gather additional evidence as necessary. This may include clarifying elements in the Instructor's report or seeking additional materials from the Instructor.
4. Determine whether there is sufficient evidence that a violation has occurred to proceed with the case.
  - a. If you believe that the case **does not merit determination of a violation**, inform the Instructor that the investigation won't proceed any further and that the grade awarded will stand. The investigation ends here.
  - b. If you believe there is **sufficient evidence of a violation**, continue the investigation.

### Sufficient evidence of a violation

1. Determine which evidence can be shared directly with the student and anonymize it if necessary. If there is key evidence that cannot be shared directly for reasons of privacy or confidentiality, create a written description of the content of the evidence with a note about why the evidence could not be shared directly. The goal is to provide the student with sufficient evidence so that they can understand how the suspicion of a violation occurred.
2. Inform the student in writing that you have received possible evidence of a violation of academic integrity. In your communication, include the components detailed in Appendix A in order to contribute to a fair process for the student.
3. Connect with the student via a real-time meeting or email communication. Both you and the student may bring an additional person to any real-time meetings. You may wish to bring an additional person (e.g., a staff member experienced with handling confidential information) to act as a witness and additional notetaker for the proceedings. When connecting with the student, include the following information:
  - a. Review the relevant portion of the Policy on Academic Integrity and these Investigation Procedures,
  - b. Explain the Instructor's findings,
  - c. Go over evidence and
  - d. Give the student an opportunity to respond.
4. If necessary, schedule a follow-up meeting, or set a timeframe of at least 2 weeks for the written submission of any additional evidence or written explanation that you or the student believes to be relevant.
5. Review all of the information received from both the Instructor and the student. Consider the credibility and balance of probabilities of the information provided – if the Instructor and student offer conflicting information, what version of events is more likely? In order to conclude that a violation occurred, you must be satisfied that on a balance of probabilities (more than 51% likelihood), the violation occurred as described. Record your reasoning for your decision.

### Conclusion of no violation after investigation

If you conclude that the Policy on Academic Integrity **has not been violated** after meeting with the student and examining any additional evidence or explanation:

1. Inform the student in writing of your finding. The Instructor should be copied on the communication. Do not copy anyone else on the communication.
2. Explain the basis of your finding to the Instructor and confirm that the graded awarded will stand. The investigation ends here.

### Conclusion of violation after investigation

If you conclude that the Policy on Academic Integrity **has been violated** after meeting with the student and examining any additional evidence or explanation, email the Office of the Registrar at [academicintegrity@uvic.ca](mailto:academicintegrity@uvic.ca) to determine whether this is a first offence. The email should contain the student's name, student number, and the fact that you are checking for a prior offence.

### No record of previous violation

1. If there is **no record of a previous violation**, review the [Policy on Academic Integrity](#) to consider the appropriate penalty.
  - a. The Policy describes a possible penalty in each case – if there are extenuating circumstances relevant to the case, you may determine that the appropriate penalty is lesser than the penalty described in the Policy.
2. Issue a letter to the student stating your finding that the Policy on Academic Integrity has been violated and the penalty that will be imposed. In your letter, include the components detailed in Appendix B in order to contribute to a fair process for the student. **Important: Copy the Office of the Registrar ([academicintegrity@uvic.ca](mailto:academicintegrity@uvic.ca)) when this letter is sent to the student.**
3. Inform the Instructor of the result of the investigation and the penalty applied. If a final course grade has already been submitted, request that the Instructor submit an Undergraduate Grade Change Form to adjust the final grade.

### Record of previous violation

1. If there is a **record of previous violation**, issue a letter to the student stating your finding that the Policy on Academic Integrity has been violated and that the case has been referred to the Faculty of Engineering and Computer Science Dean's designate for academic integrity matters, the Associate Dean Undergraduate Programs, for determination of the penalty because there has been a previous violation. The Associate Dean Undergraduate Programs ([engradu@uvic.ca](mailto:engradu@uvic.ca)), the Associate Dean's Assistant ([enguoast@uvic.ca](mailto:enguoast@uvic.ca)), and the Office of the Registrar ([academicintegrity@uvic.ca](mailto:academicintegrity@uvic.ca)) should be copied on the communication.
2. Inform the Associate Dean Undergraduate Programs ([engradu@uvic.ca](mailto:engradu@uvic.ca)) with their Assistant copied ([enguoast@uvic.ca](mailto:enguoast@uvic.ca)) of your finding and forward the evidence on which your finding was based. Indicate the penalty you would have applied were this a first violation. If you have a recommendation regarding the penalty, state this as well.

## Stage 3: Associate Dean Undergraduate Programs Investigation

**The Associate Dean Undergraduate Programs determines the penalty.**

*In cases where the Associate Dean Undergraduate Programs is the Instructor of the course, either the Dean or another Associate Dean in the Faculty will be designated to perform the Associate Dean Undergraduate Programs' decision-making functions.*

1. Review the pertinent sections in the [Policy on Academic Integrity](#).
2. Review the materials provided by the Chair, Director, or delegate, including the letter of reprimand and any other materials on file related to the previous violation(s).
3. Gather additional evidence as necessary. This may include seeking clarification of elements of the file or requesting additional materials from the Instructor and Chair, Director, or delegate.
4. If the violation is a third or subsequent offence and/or has the potential to warrant a penalty of a permanent notation or disciplinary suspension, the Associate Dean Undergraduate Programs (or designate) may contact the Faculty of Engineering and Computer Science Dean and brief them on the case.
5. Inform the student in writing that you have received an allegation of a violation of the Policy on Academic Integrity. In your communication, include the components detailed in Appendix C in order to contribute to a fair process for the student.

### **Meeting with the student**

If the student wishes to have a real-time meeting, follow the procedures below. You are encouraged to bring an additional person (e.g., a staff member experienced with handling confidential information) to any real-time meetings to act as a witness and additional notetaker for the proceedings.

1. Review the relevant portion of the Policy on Academic Integrity and these Investigation Procedures.
2. Explain the Associate Dean's role and the penalties that normally apply in cases such as the student's.
3. Go over the basis of the Chair, Director, or delegate's decision and any further evidence gathered.
4. Give the student an opportunity to respond to the allegation.
5. If necessary, schedule a follow-up meeting or set a timeframe of at least 2 weeks for the submission of any additional evidence or written explanation from the student.

### **Determination of penalty**

Determine the appropriate penalty under the [Policy on Academic Integrity](#) after reviewing the materials from the Chair/Director/delegate, notes from the meeting with the student, and any additional evidence or statement submitted. In addition to a failing grade in the assignment and/or the course, the ordinary penalty for a second offence is placement on disciplinary probation with a notation on the student's transcript which is removed upon graduation.

If the appropriate penalty is **equal to or less severe than disciplinary probation with a transcript notation that is removed upon graduation**:

1. Issue a letter to the student informing them of the penalty. Include the components detailed in Appendix D in order to contribute to a fair process for the student. The Office of the Registrar ([academicintegrity@uvic.ca](mailto:academicintegrity@uvic.ca)) should be copied on the letter to the student.

2. Inform the Instructor and the Chair/Director/delegate of the result of the investigation and the penalty applied. If a final course grade has already been submitted, request that the Instructor submit an Undergraduate Grade Change Form to adjust the final grade.
3. Inform the student in the letter that if they believe the decision to be mistaken or to have been arrived at improperly, it may be appealed by filing a letter of appeal with the [Senate Committee on Appeals](#) within 2 months of the final decision, action, or treatment being appealed.

In cases of a student committing exceptionally severe or repeated violations, it may be appropriate to refer the case to the Office of the Provost or the Office of the President for a penalty to be applied. If the appropriate penalty is equal to or more severe than **disciplinary probation with a permanent transcript notation**:

1. Inform the Office of the Provost or the Office of the President, as appropriate, and forward the materials for further review.
2. Issue a letter to the student informing them of the penalty and that this penalty has been recommended to the Office of the Provost or the Office of the President. The Office of the Registrar ([academicintegrity@uvic.ca](mailto:academicintegrity@uvic.ca)) and the Office to which the recommendation has been forwarded should be copied on the letter to the student.

## Appendix A

### Chair, Director, or delegate's initial letter to student upon suspicion of violation

The Chair, Director, or delegate's initial letter upon suspicion of a violation must include the following information and components:

- Course number, name, and term in which the course took place
- Details of the suspected violation:
  - Mention who made the allegation (e.g., the Instructor's name).
  - Include a link to the [Policy on Academic Integrity](#) and a precise statement describing the allegation with reference to the specific section of the Policy under which the suspected violation occurred.
  - Provide comprehensive details of the allegation – there must be sufficient detail to enable the student to understand and respond to the allegation.
- A copy of evidence
  - Determine which evidence can be shared directly with the student and anonymize it if necessary. If there is key evidence that cannot be shared directly for reasons of privacy or confidentiality, create a written description of the content of the evidence with a note about why the evidence could not be shared directly. For example, in the case of copying the work of another student, the student under suspicion of a violation should be provided a copy of their own work as evidence plus a statement that the work of another student is extremely similar.
  - The goal is to provide the student with sufficient evidence so that they can understand how the suspicion of a violation occurred.
- Timeline for response: students should be allowed at least 2 weeks to respond
- The options for the student to engage with the process: meeting in person, meeting online, and/or communicating in writing via email
- An invitation for the student to bring a support person to any meetings
- Support resource: Refer them to the [UVic Office of the Ombudsperson](#) ([ombuddy@uvic.ca](mailto:ombuddy@uvic.ca)). In the case of Academic Integrity investigations, the Ombudsperson can review the allegation with the student, help the student understand the situation better, explain how the university defines and deals with concerns of academic integrity, and clarify a student's rights and responsibilities.

## Appendix B

### Chair, Director, or delegate's letter to student upon conclusion that a first violation occurred

The Chair, Director, or delegate's letter upon conclusion that a first violation occurred must include the following information and components:

- Course number, name, and term in which the course took place
- Details of the violation:
  - Include a link to the [Policy on Academic Integrity](#) and a precise statement describing the violation with reference to the specific section of the Policy under which the violation occurred.
  - Provide comprehensive details of the violation.
- A copy of the evidence for the finding – the goal is to provide sufficient evidence for the student to understand why there was a conclusion that a violation occurred
- Rationale for the finding
  - Provide sufficient detail to enable the student to understand how and why the decision was made. Include both the student's and Instructor's versions of

events, if contested, and explain why the balance of probabilities resulted in the final decision.

- Penalty applied based on the [Policy on Academic Integrity](#) and any relevant extenuating circumstances. Provide a rationale and the factors considered in the decision to apply this penalty.
- Appeal process: if the student believes the decision to be mistaken or to have been arrived at improperly, it may be appealed by writing a letter of appeal to the Associate Dean Undergraduate Programs ([engradu@uvic.ca](mailto:engradu@uvic.ca)) within 21 working days of the decision.
- Support resource for appeal process: Refer them to the [UVic Office of the Ombudsperson](#) ([ombuddy@uvic.ca](mailto:ombuddy@uvic.ca)). In the case of Academic Integrity investigations, the Ombudsperson can review the allegation with the student, help the student understand the situation better, explain how the university defines and deals with concerns of academic integrity, and clarify a student's rights and responsibilities.

\*Copy the Office of the Registrar ([academicintegrity@uvic.ca](mailto:academicintegrity@uvic.ca)) when sending the letter to the student.

## Appendix C

### Associate Dean's initial letter to student upon referral from Chair, Director, or delegate

The Associate Dean's letter upon referral from the Chair, Director, or delegate must include the following information and components:

- Course number, name, and term in which the course took place
- Details of the suspected violation:
  - Mention who made the allegation (e.g., the Instructor's name).
  - Include a link to the [Policy on Academic Integrity](#) and a precise statement describing the allegation with reference to the specific section of the Policy under which the suspected violation occurred.
  - Provide comprehensive details of the allegation – there must be sufficient detail to enable the student to understand and respond to the allegation.
- A copy of the evidence provided by the Chair, Director, or delegate
- Timeline for response: students should be allowed at least 2 weeks to respond
- The options for the student to engage with the process: meeting in person, meeting online, and/or communicating in writing via email
- An invitation for the student to bring a support person to any meetings
- Support resource: Refer them to the [UVic Office of the Ombudsperson](#) ([ombuddy@uvic.ca](mailto:ombuddy@uvic.ca)). In the case of Academic Integrity investigations, the Ombudsperson can review the allegation with the student, help the student understand the situation better, explain how the university defines and deals with concerns of academic integrity, and clarify a student's rights and responsibilities.



## Appendix D

### Associate Dean's letter to student with determination of penalty

The Associate Dean's letter with determination of the penalty must include the following information and components:

- Course number, name, and term in which the course took place
- Details of the violation:
  - Include a link to the [Policy on Academic Integrity](#) and a precise statement describing the violation with reference to the specific section of the Policy under which the violation occurred.
  - Provide comprehensive details of the violation.
- A copy of the evidence for the finding
- Rationale for the finding
  - Provide sufficient detail to enable the student to understand how and why the decision was made. Include both the student's and Instructor's versions of events, if contested, and explain why the balance of probabilities resulted in the final decision.
- Penalty applied based on the [Policy on Academic Integrity](#) and any relevant extenuating circumstances. Provide a rationale and the factors considered in the decision to apply this penalty.
- Appeal process: if the student believes the decision to be mistaken or to have been arrived at improperly, it may be appealed by filing a letter of appeal with the [Senate Committee on Appeals](#) within 2 months of the final decision, action, or treatment being appealed.
- Support resource for appeal process: Refer them to the [UVic Office of the Ombudsperson](#) ([ombuddy@uvic.ca](mailto:ombuddy@uvic.ca)). In the case of Academic Integrity investigations, the Ombudsperson can review the allegation with the student, help the student understand the situation better, explain how the university defines and deals with concerns of academic integrity, and clarify a student's rights and responsibilities.

\*Copy the Office of the Registrar ([academicintegrity@uvic.ca](mailto:academicintegrity@uvic.ca)) when sending the letter to the student.