

## **Academic honesty policy**

### **Policy**

Academic honesty is essential to the mission and vision of Bow Valley College. The College is committed to fostering an environment of academic honesty through education about academic honesty and compliance with academic honesty policies. Academic honesty is expected of all learners enrolled at Bow Valley College. Academic dishonesty is a serious offence and may result in consequences ranging from a failing grade to expulsion from the College. Suspected cases of academic dishonesty shall be investigated and adjudicated fairly.

### **Definitions**

#### **Section 1**

The offence of academic dishonesty includes the following four acts:

#### **1. Plagiarism**

Involves submitting or presenting work as if it were the learner's own work done expressly for a particular course when, in fact, it is not. Most commonly, plagiarism includes, but is not limited to:

- a) When the work submitted or presented was done, in whole or in part, by an individual other than the one submitting or presenting the work (this includes having someone impersonate the learner or otherwise substituting the work of another for one's own),
- b) When parts of the work are taken from another source, including the internet or other agencies or individuals, without reference to the original author,
- c) When the whole work (e.g., an essay) is copied from another source, and,
- d) When all or a substantial portion of work in one course is also submitted in another course (even if it may be an original work of the learner) without the knowledge or prior agreement of the instructor.

While scholarly work often involves reference to the ideas, data and conclusions of other scholars, academic honesty requires that such references be explicitly and clearly disclosed.

#### **2. Cheating**

At tests or examinations includes, but is not limited to:

- a) dishonest or attempted dishonest conduct such as speaking to other candidates or communicating with them under any circumstances whatsoever,
- b) using in the examination room any textbook, notebook, memorandum, other written material, mechanical or electronic device or any other information resource not authorized by the examiner,
- c) writing an examination or part of it, or consulting any person or materials, outside the confines of the examination room without permission to do so,
- d) leaving answer papers exposed to view by other candidates, and
- e) repeated attempts to view other learners' examination papers.

#### **3. Other academic misconduct**

Includes, but is not limited to:

- a) tampering or attempting to tamper with examination scripts, class work, grades or class records,
- b) failure to abide by directions of an instructor regarding the individuality of work handed in,
- c) the acquisition, attempted acquisition, possession or distribution of examination materials or information not authorized by the instructor,
- d) impersonation of another learner in an examination or other class assignment,
- e) falsification or fabrication of clinical or laboratory reports, and

- f) non-authorized recording in the classroom or any other instructional setting without prior consent.

#### **4. Aiding others in dishonest acts.**

Any learner who knows, or ought to have known, that he/she aided or may have aided another learner in the commission of one of the above offences is also guilty of academic dishonesty.

See also:

Code of Conduct & Ethics (HR-03)

Learner Appeals (LS-14)

Performance Standards (LS-02)

## **Procedures**

### **Section 2 – Penalties**

A range of penalties for academic dishonesty may be imposed with respect to a learner as described below.

#### **Failing grade:**

A learner may be given a failing grade in an exercise, quiz, test, examination or course.

#### **Disciplinary probation:**

A learner may be placed on disciplinary probation, in which case he/she is entitled to proceed with a certificate, diploma or other academic program, but only on condition that the registration will be forfeited and the learner suspended or expelled if he/she is found guilty of a further academic offence. A learner placed on disciplinary probation is eligible to continue in the department after the satisfactory completion of the probationary period.

#### **Suspension:**

A learner may be suspended from a department in which case the learner will be denied registration within a certificate, diploma or other academic program for a specified period of time. A learner who has been placed under suspension is conditionally eligible to reapply for admission or registration at the end of a specified period of time. Suspension does not imply automatic readmission, a learner must first satisfy the dean and/or the department concerned of his/her eligibility for readmission.

#### **Expulsion from a department:**

A learner may be expelled from a department which means the learner is dismissed permanently from the department with no right to apply for readmission to that department.

A learner suspended or expelled from a department may not apply or be considered for readmission to the College in another department until at least twelve months after the end of the session in which the academic offence takes place, subject to the discretion of the dean and/or the department concerned.

#### **Expulsion from the College:**

If, upon suspending or expelling a learner from a department, the dean and/or department determine that expulsion from the College is warranted, such a recommendation may be made to the Vice-President (Academic), who may expel the learner from the College.

#### **Penalties and their application:**

Penalties will vary depending on the nature of the offence. As offences have several degrees of severity, so must the penalties imposed. A less severe response may be appropriate where, for example, there has been no previous finding of misconduct and it has been determined that, although a learner has submitted plagiarized work, the plagiarism was a result of ignorance, not

intent to deceive. A more severe penalty may be appropriate where there is a clear intent to deceive, there has been a previous finding of misconduct or there are multiple allegations of misconduct.

The above are only examples intended to illustrate how penalties may be applied. The circumstances of each individual case will determine the appropriate penalty the College may impose.

1. Where the dean and/or department is satisfied that a learner is guilty of academic dishonesty in circumstances which suggest a clear intention to deceive or otherwise commit an academic offence, the normal penalty will be:
  - a) a failing grade and disciplinary probation (*first offence*)
  - b) a failing grade and either suspension or expulsion from the department (*second offence or multiple allegations*)
2. Where the dean and/or department is satisfied that an offence has been committed, but doubt is left as to the existence of a clear intention to deceive or otherwise commit an academic offence, the normal penalty will be a failing grade and, depending on the relevant circumstances, disciplinary probation. Circumstances that may be considered are:
  - a) whether there has been a previous finding of academic misconduct
  - b) the severity of the violation
  - c) whether there are multiple allegations
3. Where a learner is found guilty of more than two offences, the normal penalty will be expulsion from the department, and in serious cases, expulsion from the College.

### **Reporting**

1. **Identification of learners in tests or examinations** – Invigilators of any tests or examinations may, when they have reason to believe there is cause to do so, challenge any candidate to produce proof of identity either in the form of the College I.D. card or some acceptable equivalent (i.e., one bearing a photograph) such as a Provincial Drivers License, Canadian Citizenship Card, Passport, etc.  
If there is clear evidence that impersonation has occurred, the individual shall not be permitted to continue the examination and shall be reported immediately to the dean of the department in which the course is offered or his/her delegate.
2. **Responsibility of instructors in cases of academic dishonesty** – An instructor has the obligation to immediately report all suspected cases of academic dishonesty in his/her course(s) to the coordinator of the relevant program.
3. **Encouragement of the reporting of academic dishonesty** – Learners or other persons who have evidence of conduct which amounts to academic dishonesty are encouraged to report such conduct to the coordinator of the relevant program. An individual or group of individuals making such a report must be prepared to state the alleged facts and their reasons for suspicion in writing, and to appear before the dean or his/her delegate and all appropriate disciplinary bodies.
4. **Responsibility of the dean of the department in which the course is offered** – The initial responsibility for dealing with cases of academic dishonesty, lies with the program coordinator and/or dean of the department offering the course in which the learner is enrolled, subject to structures for advice, recommendation or action devised by that department.
5. **Disposition of cases by the department in which a learner is registered at the time of the offence** – In alleged cases of academic dishonesty the program coordinator, dean or his/her delegate, after advising the learner of the allegation and its basis and providing him/her with copies of any documentary evidence supporting the allegation, shall interview both the instructor and the learner concerned. Where the dean or his/her delegate is satisfied that there

is conclusive evidence the learner has committed an offence, the coordinator, dean or his/her delegate shall, subject to any structures for advice, recommendation or action devised by that department, place on probation, suspend or expel the learner from the department. The probation, suspension or expulsion will be confirmed in writing to the learner at their current address, the letter will outline College appeal procedures. If the learner has admitted the offence, reference shall be made to this fact in the letter.

The Registrar will be notified of the action taken. Upon receiving notification, the Registrar may withhold the issuance of a transcript or statement of grades for the learner disciplined pending the expiry of the appeal period or exhaustion of the appeal process allowed for under Appeals below. Offences and penalties will be documented and stored on the learner's file in the Registrar's Office. Files will be maintained according to College retention schedules. Learners terminated for academic dishonesty will be assigned an identifying withdrawal code which will be recorded on the learner transcript.

**Academic misconduct – criminal offence**

Where there is a criminal act involved in academic dishonesty, for example theft (taking another learner's paper from his/her possession, or from the possession of a faculty member without permission), breaking and entering (forcibly entering an office to gain access to papers, grades or records), forgery, personation and conspiracy (impersonating another learner by agreement and writing his/her paper), and other such offences under the Criminal Code of Canada, the College may take legal advice on the appropriate response and, where appropriate, refer the matter to the police, in addition to or in substitution for any action taken by the College under these Policies.

**Guidelines****Section 3 – Appeals**

Bow Valley College has an established an appeal process, as outlined in the Learner Handbook, for learners who wish to have a decision made under this Policy reviewed. This process can be found in more detail in Policy LS-14.

**Data sheet****Accountable officer****Responsible officers****Relevant dates**

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