

Procedure for Investigation of Alleged Breach in Conduct of Research

Approval Date: August 31, 2026

Approved By: Vice President, Finance, Administration, and Applied Research

Replaces: None

Corresponding Policy: [Responsible Conduct of Research Policy](#)

Purpose

To outline the process for reporting, investigating, resolving, and appealing allegations of breach of the Responsible Conduct of Research Policy, in a manner that is fair, timely, and consistent with the principles of the [Tri-Agency Framework: Responsible Conduct of Research](#).

Scope

This procedure applies to all allegations of breach related to College-approved research conducted or associated with Cambrian College, chiefly research that has been funded by the Tri-Agency. As such, this procedure has been developed to ensure compliance with the [Tri-Agency Framework: Responsible Conduct of Research](#).

Definitions

Breach of research integrity: the act of violating or breaking the terms of a policy, the Tri-Agency Framework, or any other applicable rules, laws, or practices when carrying out research at or associated with the College.

Honourary authorship: listing individuals as authors on a publication who have not made a significant contribution to the research.

Misconduct: includes behaviour that disrupts the teaching and learning process or interferes with the well-being of other students or employees or causes damage to college property. Examples include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Assault
- All forms of bullying
- All forms of discrimination, including contributing to a poisoned environment
- Racism and hate speech, including but not limited to: anti-Indigenous, anti-Black, antisemitism, and Islamophobia
- Disruptive, threatening, or violent conduct
- Harassment
- Mobbing
- Sexual assault
- Sexual harassment
- Sexual violence
- Workplace harassment
- Workplace sexual harassment

Principal investigator: the individual who assumes responsibility for the Research project, and who is responsible for ensuring compliance with the requirements the Research Ethics Committee and/or Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (TCPS 2). The Principal Investigator is also responsible for maintaining and, also, the ethical treatment of Human Participants, where relevant, throughout the life of the project.

Research: an undertaking intended to extend knowledge through a disciplined inquiry and/or systematic investigation.

Tri-Agency Framework: Responsible Conduct of Research: describes Agency policies related to applying for and managing Agency funds, performing research, and disseminating results, and the processes that Institutions and Agencies follow in the event of an allegation of a breach of an Agency policy.

Operating Procedure

1. Reporting Allegations

- 1.1 All individuals involved in College-approved research have an obligation to report, in writing, any suspected or alleged breach of the Responsible Conduct of Research Policy.
- 1.2 Allegations shall be submitted to the Vice President, Finance, Administration, and

Applied Research (hereafter “Vice President, Applied Research”).

2. Initial Inquiry

- 2.1 Upon receipt of an allegation, the Vice President, Applied Research shall task the Director of Research and Innovation to conduct an initial inquiry to determine whether the allegation is credible and whether a formal investigation is warranted.
- 2.2 The initial inquiry shall be conducted without conflict of interest and normally within ten (10) business days of receipt of the allegation.
- 2.3 Where a satisfactory resolution is possible, the Director of Research and Innovation may attempt to resolve the matter informally.
- 2.4 If the allegation is determined to be without foundation, the complaint may be dismissed, and the complainant shall be advised in writing with reasons within 10 business days of the inquiry being opened.

3. Formal Investigation

- 3.1 Where a formal investigation is required, the Vice President, Applied Research shall appoint an Investigation Panel led by the Director of Research and Innovation within 5 business days, and consisting of three (3) independent individuals with relevant expertise, at least one of whom shall be external to the College.
- 3.2 Members of the Investigation Panel must have no real, potential, or perceived conflict of interest.
- 3.3 The Investigation Panel shall:
 - a. Review relevant documentation;
 - b. Conduct interviews as appropriate; and
 - c. Assess the allegations in accordance with principles of fairness and natural justice
- 3.4 The respondent has the right to know the allegations and to respond verbally and/or in writing and may be accompanied by an advocate of their choosing within the investigation period.
- 3.5 The Investigation Panel shall normally complete its investigation and submit a written report to the Vice President, Applied Research within one (1) calendar months of

appointment, subject to extenuating circumstances.

4. Findings and Reporting

- 4.1 The Investigation Panel shall determine whether a breach has occurred and report its findings to the Vice President, Applied Research.
- 4.2 The College shall fulfill all reporting obligations to the Secretariat on Responsible Conduct of Research (SRCR) and relevant funding agencies, as required.

5. Sanctions and Remedies

- 5.1 Cambrian may take immediate action to protect the administration of Agency funds. Immediate actions could include freezing grant accounts, requiring a second authorized signature from an institutional representative on all expenses charged to the researcher's grant accounts, or other measures, as appropriate.
- 5.2 Where a breach is confirmed, sanctions may be imposed in accordance with applicable collective agreements, College policies, and legal requirements.
- 5.3 Sanctions may include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Monitoring of research activities;
 - b. Letters of concern;
 - c. Suspension or termination of research projects;
 - d. Repayment of misused funds;
 - e. Disciplinary action up to and including dismissal or expulsion; and
 - f. Public disclosure, where required.
- 5.4 The College shall endeavour to remedy any harm or disruption caused by the breach.

6. Appeals

- 6.1 The respondent may appeal the decision in writing to the Vice President, Applied Research within ten (10) working days of receiving the investigation outcome.
- 6.2 The Vice President, Applied Research shall review the appeal and confirm or amend the decision. The decision is final.

7. Records and Confidentiality

- 7.1 All records related to allegations and investigations shall be handled confidentially and retained in accordance with College records retention requirements.

Related Policies

- [Code of Conduct Policy](#)
- [Conflict of Interest Policy](#)
- [Ethical Conduct of Research Involving Humans Policy](#)
- [Internal Privacy Policy](#)
- [Intellectual Property Policy](#)
- [Records Retention Policy](#)

References

- [Copyright Act](#)
- [Tri-Council Research Integrity Policy 2022](#)
- [Tri-Agency Framework: Responsible Conduct of Research 2021](#)
- [Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans – TCPS 2](#)