

Academic Integrity Policy

Policy Type: Academic

Policy Owner: Vice President, Academic

Approval Date: December 11, 2025

Effective Date: May 11, 2026

Replaces: Version 2022

Initial Year of Issue: 2010 (Cheating Policy)

Corresponding Procedure: [Academic Integrity Violation Procedure](#)

Purpose

To uphold the integrity and value of academic credentials at Cambrian College (“the College”) by establishing clear expectations for academic integrity and outlining the framework for addressing academic misconduct. This policy fosters a culture of honesty, responsibility, and fairness within the College community, ensuring equitable and consistent responses to academic integrity violations.

Scope

1. This policy and supporting procedure applies to all registered Cambrian College students.
2. It also applies to all students enrolled in Ontario Learn courses hosted by Cambrian College; the host college addresses all matters related to Academic Integrity Violation (AIV).

Definitions

Academic integrity: the unwavering commitment to and demonstration of the values of honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility, and courage in academic endeavors. It forms the ethical foundation of learning and research, requiring individuals to produce original work, give proper credit through accurate citation, and adhere to institutional policies. Academic integrity fosters a culture of accountability and scholarly excellence, even in the face of challenges or pressure.

Academic Integrity Office (AIO): the AIO provides guidance and education to faculty, students and staff on navigating the policy, procedure and related supports.

Academic Integrity Violation (AIV): a confirmed breach of the ethical standards, rules, or policies governing academic work, as established by the College. An AIV typically involves academic misconduct that allows a student to gain an unfair academic advantage, misrepresenting learning outcomes, or violating the principles of honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility, and courage. AIVs compromise the integrity of scholarships and may result in academic or disciplinary consequences.

Suspected academic misconduct is not considered an AIV until it has been investigated and confirmed as such under this policy.

Academic misconduct: refers to conduct that compromises the values of academic integrity, thereby undermining the credibility of credentials granted by the College. Academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to, actions that violate the rules or restrictions in an academic evaluation, resulting in an unfair academic advantage, or misrepresent a student's achievement of learning outcomes. Examples of academic misconduct include plagiarism, cheating (use of unauthorized tools, materials, or resources), impersonation, misrepresentation, falsification, and fabrication of information.

Alleged academic misconduct is subject to formal investigation under the [Academic Integrity Policy](#) and the [Academic Integrity Violation Procedure](#). Where, following investigation, it is determined that academic misconduct has occurred, the conduct is classified as an Academic Integrity Violation (AIV).

Discontinuance: The involuntary withdrawal of a student from a program or the College for academic or non-academic reasons.

Evaluation or assessment: structured activities designed to measure the extent to which a student has achieved established learning outcomes. Evaluations and assessments may include, but are not limited to, assignments, examinations, projects, tests, quizzes, presentations, and other forms of academic work. These activities encompass both formative assessments (which provide ongoing feedback to support learning) and summative assessments (which evaluate overall achievement at the conclusion of an instructional period). Evaluation and assessment are used interchangeably in the policy below.

Proctor/Invigilator: a designated individual responsible for overseeing evaluations/assessments, examinations or other testing environments to ensure fairness, security and adherence to academic integrity.

Sanction: a formal educative or disciplinary response to misconduct.

Policy Statements

1. General

- 1.1. Academic integrity is a shared responsibility. All members of the College community, including students, faculty, staff and academic administrators, are responsible for upholding the values of academic integrity to protect the value and integrity of academic credentials.
- 1.2. It is the student's responsibility to be familiar with the [Academic Integrity Policy](#) and the [Academic Integrity Violation Procedure](#). Lack of awareness of the College's policy on academic integrity does not constitute an acceptable justification for academic misconduct.
- 1.3. Reporting and investigation of academic misconduct must occur as outlined in the [Academic Integrity Violation Procedure](#).

2. Academic Integrity Violation (AIV)

2.1. Identifying Academic Misconduct

- a. Academic misconduct may be identified by a faculty member, dean or chair, staff, proctor/invigilator or student. Examples of academic misconduct are provided in Appendix A of this policy. Where the observer is not a faculty, they must notify the faculty and provide details of the observed behavior.

2.2. Investigation

- a. Alleged academic misconduct will only be investigated by a faculty member. If the faculty member determines there is reasonable belief that academic misconduct has occurred, then the faculty reports the alleged academic misconduct to the Chair responsible for the course using the [Academic Integrity Violation Form](#).
- b. Alleged academic misconduct must be investigated in a timely manner upon discovery. Faculty are expected to initiate an investigation within ten (10) business days of the incident coming to their attention. Business days, for the purpose of this policy exclude weekends, statutory holidays, and official College closures.
- c. Reasonable efforts will be made to commence the investigation within ten (10) business days of the incident coming to the relevant faculty member's attention.

- d. Investigations should occur within the academic term in which the alleged academic misconduct took place. Additional time may be required when academic misconduct occurs during an evaluation at the end of term, or extenuating circumstances, such as delayed discovery or availability of relevant parties.
- e. In the case of a student's final semester, investigations must be completed and any resulting Academic Integrity Violation (AIV) formally reported prior to the release of the student's final grade, regardless of when the misconduct is discovered.
- f. Students will be provided with an opportunity to respond to alleged academic misconduct within the established timeline (refer to the Academic Integrity Violation Procedure).

2.3. Reporting

- a. Academic misconduct will be reported when a student is observed engaging in alleged academic misconduct during an evaluation or submits an assessment that raises suspicion they may have engaged in academic misconduct.
- b. Each instance of alleged academic misconduct is reviewed independently. A student may be found responsible for multiple confirmed academic integrity violations.

3. Sanctions

- 3.1. Sanctions for AIVs shall be determined and applied in a manner that is both proportionate to the nature of the violation and progressive in response to repeated misconduct. In determining appropriate sanctions, the College will consider the following factors: the severity of the violation, the level of intent, the weight of the affected assessment, the student's history of prior AIVs, and the potential impact on the integrity of the academic program.
- 3.2. All sanctions will include an educational requirement or referral to College support services.
- 3.3. The College may impose one or a combination of sanctions in response to an AIV and reserves the right to employ a severe sanction for what it determines is a serious first, second or third violation. Sanctions may include (but are not limited to):
 - a. formal warning,

- b. educational requirement – including academic integrity training, meetings, reflections, topic-specific workshops, etc.,
- c. remedial response – including the resubmission of work (same or alternative) or behavioural/learning contract,
- d. academic penalty:
 - partial or total loss of marks on the assessment,
 - partial or total loss of marks for the course,
 - program discontinuance,
 - rescinding or denial of a college credential.

3.4. A formal warning may be issued at the discretion of the Chair as an initial response to a first AIV. However, the College reserves the right to impose more serious sanctions, including suspension from academic programs or courses, based on the specific circumstances of the violation.

- a. A warning is applied at the discretion of the Chair and is not required as a sanction for a first AIV.
- b. A warning cannot be applied as a sanction beyond the first AIV.
- c. A warning may be paired with an educational requirement or remedial response but is not generally accompanied by an academic penalty (i.e. loss of marks).

3.5. A student who fails to comply with applied sanctions may be subject to additional sanctions as determined by the Chair.

3.6. Withdrawal from or changing a course or program does not exempt a student from the sanctions associated with an AIV.

3.7. A fourth AIV will result in the student's suspension from all college programs for a period of two calendar years, unless exceptional circumstances warrant otherwise, as determined by the Chair.

3.8. In the event that the College re-admits a student following the two-year suspension for academic misconduct, the next AIV will result in an additional two-year suspension from all College programs and courses.

3.9. A final grade of "F" (0%) will be applied to each course in which the student was actively registered in at the time the suspension was imposed.

4. Decision-making Framework

- 4.1. The authority to approve or deny an AIV case lies with the Chair responsible for the course.
- 4.2. The Academic Integrity Office (AIO) may consult on AIV cases but does not hold authority to make or change decisions on cases.
- 4.3. Decisions regarding AIVs will be made using the balance of probabilities standard. This means that, based on the available evidence, the decision-maker must be satisfied that it is more likely than not that the student engaged in academic misconduct. This standard does not require absolute certainty or proof beyond a reasonable doubt; rather, it requires that the evidence supports a conclusion that the alleged misconduct is more probable than not to have occurred.

5. Records

- 5.1. The confidentiality of academic misconduct investigations and AIVs will be maintained to ensure compliance with College policies, including but not limited to the [Privacy of Information](#) and the [Official Student Records Policy](#).
- 5.2. AIV information is stored in the student record and maintained by the Office of the Registrar in compliance with the [Records Retention Policy](#).
- 5.3. AIVs are recorded at the student level and remain on the student record regardless of program change.
- 5.4. Historical information related to AIV's from the student record is available to Deans and Chairs.
- 5.5. Materials related to an AIV case will be retained by the Faculty, Chair and/or Dean as per the [Records Retention Policy](#).
- 5.6. Upon request, students may obtain copies of materials and information related to an AIV from the faculty member, Chair, or other designated academic authority. These materials will be provided within a reasonable timeframe, unless there is a compelling reason—such as the need to preserve the integrity of future course assessments or to maintain fairness in the process—that justifies withholding certain information.

6. Appeals related to Academic Integrity Violations

- 6.1. Students may appeal an AIV decision, sanction, or other College response in accordance with the [Academic Appeal Policy](#).

Responsibilities and Accountability

The following members of the Cambrian College community are responsible for ensuring the maintenance of an environment where academic integrity can flourish.

Students are responsible for:

- Upholding the principles of academic integrity by demonstrating honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility, and courage in all academic work.
- Being familiar and complying with the requirements of the [Academic Integrity Policy](#) and [Academic Integrity Violation Procedure](#), including types of academic misconduct.
- Seeking clarification from faculty or the Academic Integrity Office regarding questions related to academic integrity and misconduct.
- Completing any required academic integrity training and educational sanctions.

Faculty are responsible for:

- Administering evaluations that align with the principles of academic integrity (i.e. honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility, and courage) and minimizing the potential for academic misconduct.
- Clearly defining and communicating expectations for evaluations regarding the degree of acceptable collaboration, the use of authorized or unauthorized tools, materials, software, etc., and the restrictions and expectations in a testing environment.
- Reporting all suspected cases of academic misconduct.
- Following up with students on the completion of required sanctions.

Chairs are responsible for:

- Reviewing and deciding on reported Academic Integrity Violations.
- Assigning appropriate sanctions to confirmed Academic Integrity Violations.
- Meeting with students or faculty as needed to gather information and communicate decisions and sanctions.

Deans are responsible for:

- Reviewing and deciding on the outcome of appeals related to Academic Integrity Violations (AIVs).

Office of the Registrar is responsible for:

- Maintaining the official college repository of AIVs in student records.

Vice President, Academic is responsible for:

- Overseeing administration of Academic Integrity at the College.

Academic Integrity Office (AIO) is responsible for:

- Reporting on aggregate trends in reported AIV cases.
- Reviewing and updating the Policy and Procedure.
- Providing guidance and education to faculty, students and staff on navigating the policy, procedure and related supports.
- Consulting on academic misconduct and AIV investigations.

Proctors/Invigilators are responsible for:

- Sharing observations of alleged academic misconduct in the testing environment with faculty, provide details of the situation and/or evident to faculty to facilitate AIV reporting.

Procedures/Forms

- [Academic Integrity Violation Procedure](#)
- [Academic Integrity Violation Form](#)

Related Policies

- [Academic Appeal Policy](#)
- [Accommodations for Students with Disabilities Policy](#)
- [Code of Conduct Policy](#)
- [Information Technology Acceptable Use Policy](#)
- [Official Student Records Policy](#)
- [Privacy of Information](#)
- [Records Retention Policy](#)
- [Student's Rights and Responsibilities Policy](#)

Appendix A: Types of Academic Misconduct

Cheating

The use (or attempted use) of material or helping others in the use of material that is prohibited or inappropriate for a specific academic evaluation (e.g. assignment, test, project, etc.). Examples include (but are not limited to):

- Using unauthorized tools, materials, software, devices or concealed information during an evaluation or to gain an advantage on an evaluation (e.g. generative artificial intelligence (“AI”), cell phones, wearable technology such as smart watch or glasses).
- Copying (or attempting to copy) from others during a test, exam or assignment.
- Engaging in unauthorized communication during a test, exam, or other evaluation—whether audible, visual, or digital—without the explicit approval of the faculty member. This applies regardless of the content of the communication, even if it is not related to the evaluation.
- Sharing or stealing test answers from another student during or after an evaluation.
- Allowing another person to complete any part of an evaluation for you or you completing any part of an evaluation for another person.
- Contract cheating – the buying, selling, or of stealing essays, papers, or assignments for the purpose of submitting the work as your own. Submitting any academic work that was purchased or stolen.
- Submission of your previously completed academic work for more than one course without prior approval of the Faculty.
- Collaborating on a test, exam, or assignment without approval of the Faculty.
- Gaining unauthorized access to an evaluation prior to the scheduled evaluation period or leaving a testing environment with a copy of the evaluation without approval of the Faculty.
- Misrepresenting oneself or one's circumstances to gain academic advantage (e.g, falsely claiming illness or personal hardship to obtain extensions or accommodations).
- Unauthorized use or distribution of course materials (Sharing course materials, tests, or assignments online without permission; uploading content to third-party websites)

Plagiarism

The use of material produced by another person without acknowledging that source.

Plagiarism is distinct from co-operation and collaboration. Faculty may expect students to work together on assignments and present the results, either collectively or individually.

Examples of plagiarism include:

- Presenting, in whole or part, material created by someone else, or presenting the ideas, language, or other intellectual property of someone else as your own work without acknowledgment of the source of the material.
- Incorporating direct quotations or large sections of paraphrased material in an assignment without appropriate acknowledgement of the source(s).
- Using paraphrasing or remix software tools (e.g., generative AI, text spinners, or rewriters) to alter or generate content in a way that bypasses accepted academic writing and research practices is considered plagiarism. Proper paraphrasing requires original thought and appropriate citation of sources.
- Receiving any assistance from a third party (e.g., proofreader, editor, etc.) that compromises the authenticity of a piece of work. Proofreaders/editors may help with typographical, spelling, punctuation, grammatical, syntactical, and formatting errors, etc.; however, students using a third party to rewrite or add to existing content, to alter arguments or logic, to add or alter references, and/or to check facts, data, calculations, equations, etc.

Falsification, Fabrication or Alteration of Information

- Submitting false information as part of an academic work.
- Creating false information or altering information or data and presenting it as legitimate.
- Providing false or misleading information to a faculty member or any other college official.
- Forgery of official documentation.
- Forgery of a signature.
- Claiming another person's work as your own.
- Altering a previously graded test, exam, or assignment for the purposes of an appeal.
- Submitting an academic credential (e.g., a transcript, certificate, diploma, etc.) that has been falsified, tampered with, or modified in any way.