

Academic Dishonesty Procedure & Policy



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It is important that all of our graduate program leaders, faculty and administrative staff are aware of the proper procedure for handling academic dishonesty matters. I would like to clarify what to do with graduate course grade sheets when an academic dishonesty matter has been identified. The policies are posted at <http://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/Students-AcademicStudies/AcademicIntegrity.pdf>.

For graduate level course work, the instructor is to report the matter, without delay, to the Academic Integrity office and then enter "*incomplete*" on the submitted grade sheet. These matters are handled and resolved prior to when final grades are required to update incompletes.

If the instructor fails to bring a charge forward within a reasonable time, the Assistant Dean/Program Director may step in and bring the charge forward.

Other academic submissions (comprehensive exams, committee reports, thesis – draft or final versions submitted) are also subject to the policies and are to be reported by the faculty member who identifies the matter of academic dishonesty in question.

It is important to note that students cannot withdraw while an academic dishonesty matter is under investigation. One cannot presume the outcome (not everyone charged is found guilty) so the student's status remains unchanged during an investigation.

Any student attempt to "beat the clock" by requesting to withdraw in good standing, prior to the Academic Integrity office being notified, will be in vain. Such withdrawals are rescinded and removed from the transcript pending the decision of the adjudicator on whether the student is guilty and the appropriate penalty.

We have had offences come to light that were the first reported occurrence, with prior similar occurrences (not reported) known to the program or supervisor – please ensure you report **all** such matters to Academic Integrity. A seemingly minor offence may not be the first and the experience of going through an Academic Integrity hearing should convince a student who has violated policies never to do it again! Dealing with the problem at the earliest event is always the best.

If you are unsure what to do, please review the policy. The document isn't that long and one can use a keyword search to help locate the relevant section quickly. Like all good policies, the details are most familiar when one is handling (or has recently handled) an offence. If the Program Director or Assistant Dean are consulted about a matter, and they are unsure what to do or advise, they should contact the Academic Integrity office. Their help is very useful, even prior to reporting a matter (e.g. to run through the procedures to make sure you are following them right).