



Procedures Title	Ethics and Integrity in Research and Scholarly Activity
Procedures No.	F.1.2
Approval Body	Board of Governors
Policy Sponsor	Vice President, Academic & Applied Research
Next Scheduled Review	May 2028
Effective Date	May 31, 2023

APPROPRIATE CONDUCT IN RESEARCH AND SCHOLARLY ACTIVITY

Researchers must engage in appropriate conduct by ensuring that they:

1. Engage in culturally sensitive practices of research with scholarly and scientific rigour, through all stages of the work: planning, obtaining, recording, analyzing, storing, reporting, and publishing data or results.
2. Recognize substantive contributions of all collaborators (including students); use unpublished work of other researchers and scholars only with permission and with due acknowledgement; and use archival materials in accordance with the rules of the archival source.
3. Include in the authorship of published work all those who have materially contributed to and share responsibility for the concepts of the publication, and only those persons.
4. Use information, concepts or data as permitted by author(s) and licensing agreements.
5. Seek and obtain approval from the VCC Research Ethics Board (REB) before engaging in any research involving humans (unless exempted under the Vancouver Community College Policy F.1.1, Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans), and comply fully with the approved research protocols.
6. Comply with VCC operational and financial terms of research grants and/or contracts awarded to a researcher.
7. Disclosing as early as possible in writing to the sponsors of the research project, VCC and other institutions, journals or funding agencies, any material conflict of interest, financial or other, that might influence their decision on whether the researcher should be asked to review manuscripts or applications, test products, or be permitted to undertake work sponsored from outside sources.
8. Voluntarily and immediately disclose in writing to the Research Ethics Board (REB), any conflict of interest, including material financial interest in a company that contracts with VCC to undertake research, particularly research involving the company's products: including ownership, substantial stock holding, directorship, significant honoraria, or consulting fees, but does not include minor stock holdings in a large publicly traded company.

ATTRIBUTION OF AUTHORSHIP

9. Authorship implies significant intellectual contributions to the work which, when recognized, must include people who have materially contributed to and share responsibility for content.
10. Students will be given the appropriate recognition for authorship or collection of data in any publication.

HANDLING OF RESEARCH DATA

11. Research is conducted and data are acquired in different manners. In the case of collaborative work, all members of the research team are responsible for ensuring proper acknowledgement of each team member when the data is released in any form.
12. All data collected by, on or from Indigenous communities must follow the First Nations Principles of Ownership, Control, Access and Possession (OCAP).
13. A complete set of all original research data must be securely retained by the principal researcher for the time specified by the VCC Record Retentions Schedule following the completion of the research or as required by law, whichever is longer. Data collected under the principles of OCAP are an exception to this.
14. Data must be securely stored and if in digital format must be password protected and held on a Canadian server to ensure data sovereignty.

ALLEGATIONS OF RESEARCH MISCONDUCT

15. Allegations of misconduct in research may be made by any person(s) within or outside the College. Anonymous allegations will not be investigated.
16. Allegations must be in writing, dated and signed by the individual(s) making the allegations. Such allegations must contain fully documented evidence and must normally be made within six months of the alleged misconduct.
17. The allegation shall be received by the Vice President, Academic & Research (VPAR). Allegations received by others must be treated confidentially and conveyed directly to the VPAR.
18. If the VPAR is a party to the alleged misconduct, the President will assume the VPAR's role in applying this policy.
19. In the event of an allegation of misconduct being made that involves funds from the federal Tri-Agencies an exact copy of the allegation shall be forwarded to the Secretariat on Responsible Conduct of Research (SRCR).
20. In cases of collaborative research involving other institutions, the VPAR may modify these procedures to facilitate the conduct of parallel or joint investigations of alleged research misconduct, or as otherwise deemed appropriate by the VPAR.
21. Throughout the informal and formal investigation, the identities of all parties involved, and any records, data, files, electronic recordings or information gathered during the proceedings shall be kept in confidence by all concerned, except in the case of allegations involving federal Tri-Agency funds.

22. The VPAR is responsible for retaining, in a secure location, and controlling appropriate access to any records, data, files, electronic recordings, or information arising from this policy.

INITIAL REVIEW OF RESEARCH MISCONDUCT

23. At any time during the course of an investigation into research misconduct, the VPAR has the authority to:
 - a. Close down and declare “off limits” facilities used for research;
 - b. Protect the administration of College and external funds involved in the research;
 - c. Obtain and retain relevant documentation (e.g. lab notes, Computer disks, hard drives, proof of credentials) related to an investigation;
 - d. Request that members of the College appear before an Investigative Committee and that they answer the Investigative Committee’s questions or provide materials to it;
 - e. Dismiss the allegation if, based on reasonable information, the VPAR believes that continued investigation will result in a determination that the alleged misconduct in research has not occurred; and
 - f. Take such other action as the VPAR deems appropriate.
24. Upon receipt and review of an allegation the VPAR (or delegate) shall proceed as outlined below, or shall appoint an individual to review the matter (the reviewer) and report to the VPAR.
25. Within five (5) working days of receiving the allegation, the VPAR shall inform the Researcher in writing of the allegation. The VPAR will conduct confidential, informal consultations with all parties to determine if an informal resolution is possible.
26. If informal consultation fails to resolve the allegation, the VPAR shall convene a meeting with all parties to discuss the allegation.
27. Following this meeting, the VPAR may:
 - a. Initiate an investigation, or
 - b. Dismiss the allegation.
 - c. Address an allegation regarding a student under Academic Integrity Policy D.4.5
28. If the VPAR decides a formal investigation is warranted the Researcher will be notified with 14 days of the consultation. If an employee association was notified, then it will be informed of the decision at the same time.
29. If an allegation pertains to the use federal Tri-Agency funds, the VP Research shall inform the SRCR confirming whether the investigation is proceeding or not.

FORMAL INVESTIGATION

30. If the VPAR determines that a formal investigation is warranted, they shall, within 14 days of the decision, appoint an investigative committee of a minimum of three

members, none of whom shall have any conflict of interest with respect to any parties concerned in the allegations.

31. Members of the Investigative Committee shall have the appropriate expertise to evaluate the particulars of the allegation and may or may not be members of the College community.
32. All parties shall be notified of the composition of the committee.
33. Any objection to the composition of the Investigative Committee shall be made to the VPAR within 5 working days of this notification. The only grounds for objection are alleged bias or conflict of interest.
34. The mandate of the Investigative Committee is to determine on a balance of probabilities whether misconduct in research has occurred, and if so, its extent and seriousness. The decision is based upon a majority vote and the determination is binding on the College.
35. The Investigative Committee shall invite the researcher to make a submission in writing upon viewing the evidence presented against them.
36. The Investigative Committee has the right to examine any records, data, information, documents, files, and associated materials related to the investigation and question any student or member of faculty or staff during its investigation. The Office of VPAR will be responsible for storing and maintaining appropriate access to records, consistent with applicable policy and legislation.
37. All parties, both those who have made the allegations, and the Researcher(s) involved, shall be given an opportunity to be interviewed, to comment on the allegations, and to respond to any evidence before the Investigative Committee.
38. The investigation may include interviews, which will be held in camera.
39. Records of meetings will be considered confidential to the extent permitted by law.
40. The Investigative Committee has the right to seek impartial expert opinions and advice, as it deems necessary, in order to ensure that the investigation is thorough and authoritative.
41. The Investigative Committee will submit a written report to the VPAR within 30 days of its appointment including the substantive evidence that was considered in its review and its recommendations.
42. Upon receipt of the Investigative Committee's report, the VPAR shall reach a decision and prepare a final report within 14 days containing:
 - a. A copy of the allegation;
 - b. The findings of the VPAR as to whether the allegation has been upheld;
 - c. A statement of the reasons for the findings.
43. The final report shall also describe any actions that are to be taken including, but not limited to:
 - a. Sanctions to be taken against a Researcher who is found to have engaged in misconduct;

- b. Actions to be taken to protect or restore the reputation of the Researcher if wrongly accused;
 - c. Actions to protect an individual found to have made a responsible accusation;
 - d. Sanctions against an individual found to have made an irresponsible or malicious allegation.
44. Sanctions shall be consistent with VCC policies and collective agreements.
45. The report of the Investigative Committee and the final report prepared by the VPAR will be forwarded, to the President, the respondent(s) and their dean, the complainant(s), and any bargaining unit informed of the proceedings. Any distribution of the report shall be consistent with the British Columbia Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.
46. The VPAR is responsible for ensuring that any actions specified in the final report are carried out.
47. Where the finding is that misconduct has occurred, the VPAR shall forward the report of the Investigative Committee and the final report within 30 days of the conclusion of the investigation, to any granting agency (in the case of federal Tri-Agency funds, to the SRCR) or sponsor known to have provided support for the scholarly activity and may inform other relevant persons or agencies in the interests of protecting the integrity of scholarly activity.
48. Where the VPAR dismisses an allegation, or determines that scholarly misconduct has not occurred, the Office of the VPAR shall maintain one copy of all materials in a secure place for a period of one year from the date of such determination. The secured copy of the materials shall be consulted only if a complaint of mischievous or malicious allegation is submitted regarding the original complaint. After one year, the remaining copy of materials will be destroyed.

RELATED RESOURCES

F.1.2 Ethics and Integrity in Research and Scholarly Activity Policy