

## CORPORATE POLICY

<b>POLICY NUMBER:</b>	<b>SS-3203-2008</b>
<b>POLICY TITLE:</b>	<b>Academic Honesty</b>
<b>OWNER:</b>	<b>Registrar</b>
<b>APPROVED BY:</b>	<b>Senior Leadership Team</b>
<b>EFFECTIVE:</b>	<b>July 23, 2008</b>
<b>REFERENCE:</b>	
<b>LINKS TO OTHER POLICY:</b>	

### BACKGROUND

Academic honesty is a fundamental guiding principle for all academic initiatives at Mohawk College. The College is committed to ensuring academic honesty in all activities associated with teaching and learning, research, administrative and consultative work. High standards of academic behaviour benefit all students and staff – past, present and future and preserve College values.

### Definitions

**Academic Dishonesty:** In its broadest sense, academic dishonesty refers to any conscious, deliberate or reckless step or omission taken to obtain academic credit through deception and/or fraudulent means. Academic dishonesty, in whatever form, compromises the values of the College, undermines the credibility of credentials granted by the College and discourages students and staff who pursue their academic endeavours honestly. Academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to the following examples: misrepresentation of personal credentials of achievement, plagiarism, cheating on examinations or tests, passing the work of others off as your own, and undisclosed conflicts of interest.

**Purpose:** This policy outlines principles which support academic honesty and is intended to outline the expectations of academic honesty placed on all students and staff at the College. It outlines the penalties to be imposed for academic dishonesty by students.

**Scope:** This policy applies to all staff, applicants and students associated with Mohawk College.

## POLICY STATEMENTS

1. All members of the Mohawk College community are responsible for ensuring the maintenance of an environment where academic integrity can flourish. In support of this, the College has committed to various strategies and guidelines for promoting academic integrity in the submission of written work and the writing of tests and examinations; these are identified in Appendix A of this policy. Additional strategies may be available in each department.
2. Allegations of academic dishonesty pertaining to any student will be investigated fully, according to fair and consistent principles and practices outlined in this policy.
3. Confirmed instances of academic dishonesty by students are subject to specific penalties (see Appendix A – P8.) which will be levied consistently and linked to both the severity and frequency of the offence.
4. To accommodate situations where a student disagrees with a decision that he/she is guilty of academic dishonesty or with the penalty that has been applied, the College maintains a two-level Appeal process:
  - An initial, informal process involving dialogue between college administrative staff and the student.
  - A more structured review by an Appeal Panel if the informal appeal process does not result in a satisfactory resolution.

This Appeals process (See Appendix B) will be applied consistently across the College in all departments and Schools.

## POLICY REVISION DATE

### ATTACHMENTS

**Appendix A – Procedures for Policy Implementation**

**Appendix B – Student Appeals Procedures**

**Attachment A – Academic Offences Form**

## SPECIFIC LINKS

**APPENDIX A**  
**PROCEDURES FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF POLICY AC705**

**P1. Guidelines for Reducing Opportunities for Academic Dishonesty**

The Academic Honesty policy and processes and procedures related to plagiarism detection must be reviewed with students by faculty at the beginning of each semester to ensure that students fully understand the requirements of academic honesty and the seriousness with which the College views dishonest practices.

Faculty members are encouraged to make diligent efforts to limit or eliminate opportunities for academic dishonesty. The following guidelines should be implemented.

**Written Work**

To minimize opportunities for academic dishonesty in the preparation of written work, the following practices should be undertaken where possible:

- Organize the collection and return of essay, laboratory reports, take-home examinations, computer assignments and other written requirements in such a way that it is difficult for students to copy someone else's work.
- Clearly indicate the degree of collaboration which is acceptable for group assignments and the processes which will be used to identify individual work.
- Weight course evaluations in favour of work done in situations where opportunities for cheating can be minimized.
- Vary assignments throughout the year and from year to year.

**Examinations and In-course Tests**

- Employ seating arrangements which minimize opportunities for copying, and supervise students continuously during the examination or test.
- Order examination questions differently for adjacent rows of desks.
- Use college booklets or examination sheets identified by a distinguishing mark to eliminate the use of prepared answers.
- Specify aids which can be used during the examination or test, and check items such as calculators for memory.
- Use handouts or overheads to present essential information during the examination or test.
- Clearly specify books and materials which will be permitted in the examination room for open book examinations, and check to make certain that students have not brought in unauthorized materials or aids.
- Vary examinations and tests from class to class, throughout the year and from year to year.

## **P2. Examples of Academic Dishonesty**

Specific examples of academic dishonesty include but are not limited to the following:

### **Plagiarism**

- Presenting in whole or part material created by someone else, or the ideas, language or other intellectual property of someone else as one's own work without appropriate acknowledgment of the source of the material. Plagiarism applies to all assignments including, but not limited to, papers, essays, laboratory reports, diagrams and drawings, and computer projects.
- Incorporating direct quotations or large sections of paraphrased material in a report without appropriate acknowledgement of the source.

Note: Plagiarism should be distinguished from co-operation and collaboration.

Students may be expected to work together on assignments and present the results, either collectively or individually. This practice is acceptable provided that the faculty member is aware of whose work is being presented.

### **Inappropriate Approaches to Papers, Essays, Assignments, Laboratory Work and Clinical and Work Term Placements**

- Submission of an essay or assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else as one's own work, or permitting one's work to be submitted under the name of another student
- Copying a report, essay or assignment or knowingly allowing a report to be copied by someone else or submission of a report completed by someone else.
- Preparation of an essay, paper or assignment for submission by another student.
- Falsifying research data or other material in an essay or assignment.
- Using data compiled by someone else without the knowledge and permission of the faculty member
- Submitting for credit any academic work for which credit has been previously obtained or is being sought in another course or program of study without the knowledge and approval of the faculty member to whom the work is submitted.
- Buying or selling of essays, papers or assignments.

### **Inappropriate Behaviour Related to Examinations and Tests**

- Copying from another student or knowingly permitting another student to copy material.
- Submitting a take-home examination or paper completed by someone else.
- Using unauthorized aids or materials in a test or examination.
- Having an unauthorized computer program open during a test or examination.
- Obtaining an examination or test in advance of the scheduled date and time for writing through theft, bribery, collusion, purchase or other means.

- Sharing the content of an examination or test with other students.
- Unauthorized possession, however obtained, of an examination or test in advance of the schedule date and time for writing, unless the student reports the matter to an appropriate source as soon as possible after obtaining the copy.
- Impersonating a candidate or allowing someone to impersonate you during an examination or test.

### **Inappropriate Use of Computer Technology**

- Inappropriate use of computer technology to obtain an unauthorized academic advantage on an assignment, test or examination.
- Unauthorized entry into a computer file for the purpose of using, reading or changing its contents.
- Unauthorized transfer of one or more files or part of the data contained within the file(s).
- Unauthorized use of another individual's identification and password.
- Use of computing facilities to interfere with, or alter the work of another student, faculty member or College staff member.

**Falsification of an Academic Credential** - Submission of an academic credential such as a transcript, diploma, or degree that has been falsified, tampered with or modified in any way.

Note: The examples of various acts of academic dishonesty listed above are not intended as a complete and exhaustive list. In situations where students are unsure of the appropriateness of a specific academic behaviour, they are strongly advised to discuss the matter with the faculty member to avoid any suspicion of dishonesty and/or disciplinary action.

- P3. Faculty are encouraged to make use of *Turnitin* (or other web-based plagiarism detection service currently in use at the College), as a routine strategy when students submit reports, essays, or other written work. *Turnitin* is a text matching system that compares a submitted assignment with text located on publicly accessible Internet pages, published works from proprietary databases, and every student paper ever submitted to *Turnitin*. The intent to routinely use *Turnitin* should be clearly indicated on the course outline, so that students are aware that their written assignments will be screened for plagiarism.

Technical support and training are provided for faculty and students as well as on-line support links around plagiarism and citation/issues problems and assignment development.

- P4. When academic dishonesty is suspected, it is the responsibility of the faculty member and/or the invigilator (if applicable) to reference the **Academic Honesty Policy** in discussions with the student and to fully investigate the situation to

determine whether misconduct occurred. The faculty member will retain possession of unauthorized aids, examinations, suspect essays, assignment, etc. to assist in the investigation. An investigation must include a meeting with the student at which time the student will be advised of the allegations of dishonesty against him/her and provided with an opportunity to respond to those allegations.

Unsubstantiated claims of dishonesty will not be pursued. However, when there is a strong suspicion of academic dishonesty, but no conclusive proof, the faculty member may at his/her discretion issue an oral warning to the student(s) involved. (Penalty # 1) Except in situations where there is a significant element of doubt that the student has deliberately engaged in dishonest academic practices, records of oral warnings should be sent to the Registrar's Office, using an **Academic Offences Form included as Attachment A**. This will be retained in the Academic Offences File.

- P5. When the investigation discloses to the satisfaction of the investigator or the investigator's supervisor that there is evidence indicating, on a balance of probabilities, that an act of academic dishonesty has taken place, the faculty member, together with the Program Coordinator, or the Program Manager and the Course Associate Dean will meet with the student(s) involved to discuss the matter, receive any additional evidence which the student(s) may have which may exonerate the student or demonstrate extenuating circumstances. Decisions regarding penalties/sanctions will be determined in accordance with procedure P9. below.

It should be noted that students pursuing study in Canada from abroad may be accustomed to different standards and approaches toward academic honesty. In such situations, the faculty member should take care to determine that the student(s) fully understand(s) what constitutes academic dishonesty at Mohawk College. The penalties outlined in this policy apply to conscious and deliberate or reckless occurrences of academic dishonesty. At the faculty member's discretion, a first occurrence may be dealt with by way of an oral warning where the faculty member is satisfied that the student genuinely did not understand that his/her conduct was academic dishonesty. However, subsequent substantiated occurrences of academic dishonesty by the student should be interpreted as conscious, deliberate acts and are subject to the penalties outlined in this policy.

- P6. Any case of a suspected infraction of this policy should be investigated as promptly as the circumstances permit and should academic dishonesty be found, a decision should be reached concerning any sanctions or penalties as soon as possible following investigation of the incident.
- P7. The Associate Dean is responsible for reporting instances of academic dishonesty to the Registrar's Office where a centralized Academic Offences file will be maintained and used to verify whether a student has a previous record of

academic dishonesty. Repeated acts of academic dishonesty are subject to escalating penalties.

The **Academic Offences Form**, included as **Attachment A** to this policy should be used for this purpose. The Registrar's Office will prepare a statistical report annually, summarizing information presented in the **Academic Offences Forms** submitted by Associate Deans.

#### P8. **Penalties/Sanctions**

Depending on the nature of the offence, the following disciplinary actions apply for instances of academic dishonesty:

1. Counseling the student when there is a strong suspicion of academic misconduct, which cannot be proved on the balance of probabilities.
2. Issue of a written warning when there is proof, on the balance of probabilities, of academic misconduct of a minor nature.
3. Requirement for resubmission of the same or an alternate assignment. In such instances, the faculty member may use his/her discretion to reduce or limit the grade that can be achieved for a resubmitted or alternative assignment.
4. Assignment of a failing grade (0%) for the assignment, test or examination, with no opportunity to resubmit. Depending on the value assigned in the course evaluation to the assignment, test or examination, this action could result in the issue of a failing grade (0%-59%) for the course.
5. Assignment of a failing grade (0%-59%) reflected on the transcript for the course in which the offence was committed.
6. Suspension from the college for a period not less than the end of the semester/intake in which the student is enrolled, nor longer than one full year. Levying of this penalty will result in automatic failures (0%-59%) on the student's transcript for all courses in which he/she is registered, and no fees will be refunded for that semester/intake. No withdrawal from the courses in question will be processed at any time. A notation will be entered on the student's transcript identifying the reason for the suspension. The notation will be expunged from the record when the student is eligible for graduation.

Students who have been suspended from the College as the result of academic dishonesty must apply for readmission subject to the conditions which are in effect for students who reapply following unsatisfactory performance.

Apprenticeship students will be "cease trained". The faculty member is responsible for completing an "Apprenticeship Ceased Training Report" and forwarding the original copy to the Registrar's Office – Student Services, Stoney Creek Campus and to the Skills Development Office,

Brantford Campus. These areas will be responsible for forwarding a copy of the report to the Ministry of Training, College and Universities. Readmission to any College apprenticeship training program will be at the discretion of the College in consultation with a Ministry training consultant.

7. Expulsion from the College. This penalty will result in automatic grades of zero (0%) being reflected on the student’s transcript for all courses in which the student is registered and no fees will be refunded. For “Pass/Fail” courses, the designation “FL” will be used on the transcript. No withdrawal from the courses in question will be processed at any time. A notation, “Withdrawn by College”, will be entered on the student’s transcript and a notation of the reason for expulsion will be placed on the student’s internal record with an appropriate hold.

Students who have been expelled from the College as a result of academic dishonesty will not be allowed to re-apply or be re-admitted to any Mohawk College program or course for a period of 3 years.

**Criminal Acts** It should be noted that some forms of academic dishonesty ( e.g. theft and impersonation) may constitute criminal acts which are liable to criminal prosecution as well as expulsion from the College.

The following table outlines disciplinary penalties for specific examples of academic dishonesty.

Academic Offence	Appropriate Penalty
Plagiarism	Any of numbers 2 -5 above, depending on the extent of the offence
Submitting an essay, assignment, etc. of another as one’s own work, or permitting one’s work to be submitted under the name of another student.	# 2 – 5
Falsifying research data or other material in an essay, or assignment	# 2 – 5
Unauthorized submission of one’s own academic work for which credit has already been obtained, or is being sought	# 2 – 5
Copying from another student in an assignment, test or examination situation, or knowingly permitting a student to copy	# 4 or 5
Possession of unauthorized materials or aids in a test of examination	# 4 or 5
Unauthorized and unreported advance possession, however obtained, of an examination or test	# 6 or 7

Inappropriate use of computer technology to obtain an unauthorized academic advantage on an assignment, test or examination	# 2 – 7
Impersonating a candidate in an examination or test, or allowing someone to impersonate you during an examination or test	#7
Falsification of an academic credential	#7
Second or subsequent Offence	# 4- 7, depending on the nature of the offence

**P9. Determination and Notification of a Penalty**

When it has been determined that an act of academic dishonesty has occurred , the faculty member and the Program Coordinator and the Associate Dean for the course are responsible for determining an appropriate penalty within the range of disciplinary penalties identified in P8. above, provided that in the case that a suspension or expulsion is determined to be appropriate, the matter must be referred to the appropriate program Vice President for final determination of penalty. In assessing a penalty, they should consider the severity of the offence and any previous record of academic dishonesty. The centralized Academic Offences file maintained in the Registrar’s Office will be used to verify any previous record of academic dishonesty.

**P9.1 Program Course Level Penalties** A range of penalties from warning to a failing grade (# 1 – 5 above) can be imposed by the Associate Dean.

Once a decision on a penalty has been reached, the Associate Dean is responsible for notifying the student in writing within **seven working days** of the penalty for the offence and the consequences of repeated academic dishonesty. The letter sent to the student will advise the student of the Appeals Procedures should he/she wish to challenge the decision. The letter will be accompanied by a copy of the Academic Offences Form, signed by the faculty member and the Associate Dean. The original of the Offences Form will be maintained in the Registrar’s Office.

A copy of the letter sent to the student will also be retained in the offices of the Associate Deans for the course and the program, and the appropriate Vice President.

**P9.2 Program Level Penalties** - Suspension from a program or expulsion from the College (Penalties # 6 and 7 above) can only be levied at the Divisional level.

In the case of serious offences, or second or subsequent offences by a student, where penalties of suspension or expulsion may apply, the matter must be referred to the program Vice President who will be responsible for determining an appropriate penalty. He/she will review the evidence and the student’s record and may investigate further before reaching a decision. Before reaching a final

decision, the Vice President should meet with the student and review the allegations with the student in order to provide the student with an opportunity to respond to the allegations. The Vice President will immediately notify the Registrar, in writing, that an investigation is under way.

Once a decision has been reached, the Vice President is responsible for notifying the student, in writing, of the penalty for the offence, additional implications identified below, and if appropriate, the consequences of repeated academic dishonesty. The letter sent to the student will advise the student of the Appeals Procedures. The letter will be accompanied by a copy of the Academic Offences Form, signed by the faculty member and the Vice President. The original of the Offences Form will be maintained in the Registrar's Office. A copy of the letter sent to the student will also be retained in the offices of the Associate Deans for the course and the program, and the Registrar.

**P9.3 Falsification of an Academic Credential** - In the event a student falsifies an academic credential, the student will be denied admission into the program/course or will be expelled from the College. When there is evidence to suggest falsification of an academic credential, the matter (including all relevant documentation) will be referred immediately to the appropriate Associate Registrar for investigation. Prior to making any final determination on the issues, the investigator will meet with the student to review the allegations with the student and provide the student an opportunity to respond to the allegations.

If it is determined that a credential has been falsified, the Associate Registrar will refer the matter to the College Registrar. If denial of admission applies, the Registrar will write the individual notifying him/her of the decision to deny admission to program/course.

If the case of expulsion from the program, the Registrar will consult with the appropriate Vice President who will notify the student of the expulsion decision.

## APPENDIX B – ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY

### Student Appeal Procedures

#### Level 1 - Informal Appeal

- P1. Where a student disagrees with a decision that he/she is guilty of academic dishonesty or with the penalty that has been applied, he/she must pursue the following **informal procedure** before making a formal appeal.

The Student must provide written notice of intent to appeal to the Associate Dean that he/she wishes to initiate an informal appeal of the decision and for that purpose wishes to meet with the Associate Dean and the faculty member at a mutually convenient time. The student must initiate the appeal by providing the written notice of intent to appeal within **seven working days** of receipt of the academic dishonesty decision.

- P2. Under normal circumstances, the meeting between the Associate Dean, the faculty member and the student will take place within **seven working days** of the receipt of the student's written notice of intent to appeal.

The meeting between the Associate Dean, the faculty member and the student will be conducted in a courteous, respectful manner. It is intended to provide all parties the opportunity to present their understanding of the situation and ideally to reach a mutually satisfactory resolution. The following outcomes are possible and acceptable:

- The situation is resolved with a determination that the student is innocent of the offence and no penalty is warranted.
- The penalty is adjusted upward (more severe)
- The penalty is adjusted downward (less severe)
- The penalty stays the same

The Associate Dean will inform the student in writing of the appeal decision. If the student is found to be innocent of the offence, then the record of the offence and all documentation will be destroyed.

#### Level 2 – Formal Appeal Process

- P3. If the student is not satisfied with the results of the informal appeal process, the student may file a formal appeal of a decision that he/she is guilty of academic dishonesty or the penalty that has been applied. The student must provide written notice of appeal, along with a requisite administrative fee of \$25.00 (*refundable if resolved in the student's favour*) to the Registrar **within seven working days** of

receipt of written notification of the outcome of the informal appeal. The notice of appeal must include:

- A copy of the decision being appealed;
- The reason the student is appealing;
- The grounds relied on by the student in the appeal;
- Any documents relied on in the appeal;
- Identification of the desired outcome.
- The names of any witnesses and/or College parties who the student wishes to have appear on his/her behalf.

Failure to pay the required fee and/or file the written notice of appeal within the time limitations will void any right of appeal.

- P4. The Appeal Hearing must be scheduled to take place **within fourteen working days** of the date on which the student filed the appeal. Written notice of the Appeal hearing must be provided to the student, the Course Associate Dean and the Program Vice President.
- P5. The Appeal process will be conducted as a formal hearing before the Appeal Committee. While the Appeal Committee is not a tribunal subject to the *Statutory Powers Procedure Act*, the procedural provisions of that Act will be used as the basis of the procedures to be used by the Appeal Committee.

The Appeal Committee will include the following members (or designates):

- Registrar or designate (Associate Dean, non-voting member) (who shall act as Chair)
- A Program Associate Dean or Designate in cases where the discipline involves a Program Course Level penalty, or a Vice President, in cases where the discipline involves a Program Level penalty.
- 1 Faculty member
- 1 Student (from MSA or MCACES or Business Development)

**It is essential that all members of the Appeal Committee have no prior involvement in the situation.**

**Note: The Appeal process has been developed as an internal College strategy for resolving disputes related to academic honesty. Consequently, legal representation is not permitted during the Appeal Hearing.**

- P6. The Appeal Panel may extend or abridge the time for filing of documents or receiving statements in exceptional circumstances, provided there is no prejudice to any other party to the proceeding.
- P7. The Appeal Panel will hear the parties and any other witnesses or individuals who appear and wish to make presentations before the Appeal Panel. The student will present his/her case first. The Associate Dean or faculty member who investigated

the matter in the first instance or the Associate Dean or Vice President who imposed the penalty, will present the case for the penalty which was imposed. The Student and the Associate Dean or faculty shall have a right to reply to any information presented.

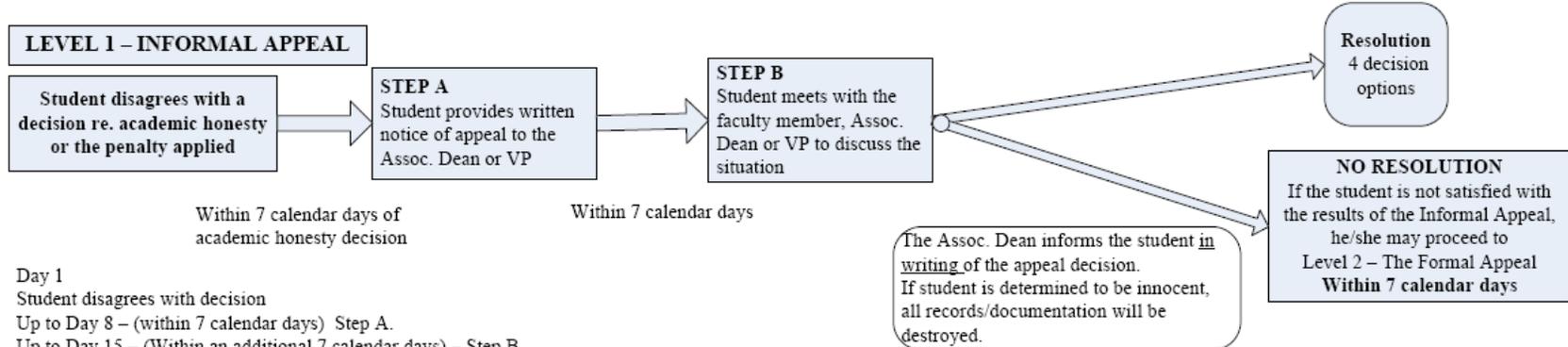
- P8. Upon hearing the evidence and reviewing the submissions, the Appeals Panel will render a written decision **within seven working days** of the hearing and provide a copy of the decision to those individuals involved in the hearing. The Appeal Panel's decision is final.

The following outcomes are possible and acceptable:

- The student is found to have acted honestly and there is no penalty
- The penalty is adjusted upward (more severe)
- The penalty is adjusted downward (less severe)
- The penalty remains the same

Note: Under exceptional circumstances, the timeframes may be adjusted. Students may continue to attend classes while Informal and Formal Appeal proceedings are taking place.

## Appeals Procedure – Academic Honesty



Day 1

Student disagrees with decision

Up to Day 8 – (within 7 calendar days) Step A.

Up to Day 15 – (Within an additional 7 calendar days) – Step B

Under most circumstances, the Informal Appeal Process should be completed, and a decision reached within 15 days of the original decision regarding the academic honesty issue.

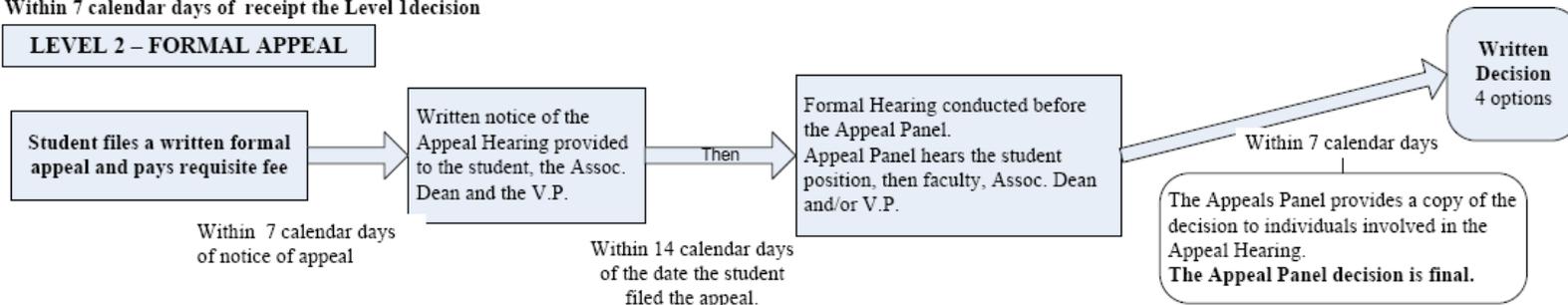
Appeal decision reached by Assoc. Dean and/or the VP. 4 Resolution Options:

- Finding of Innocence
- Grade Adjustment Upward
- Grade Adjustment Downward
- No grade change

If no resolution is reached at Level 1, the student has 7 calendar days in which to move the Appeal to Level 2.

Within 7 calendar days of receipt the Level 1 decision

### LEVEL 2 – FORMAL APPEAL



Normally, the Formal Appeal must be filed within 7 days of the Level 1 decision (22 days following the original academic honesty decision) Formal Appeal Hearing must take place by Day 14 following notice of formal appeal (29 days following original decision)

Day 21 - Written Decision must be rendered (36 days following the original dishonesty decision)

Decision reached by Appeal Panel. 4 Options:

- Finding of Innocence
- Grade Adjustment Upward
- Grade Adjustment Downward
- No grade change

Timelines for Level 1 and Level 2 Appeals may be abridged or extended in exceptional circumstances.

**ATTACHMENT A TO ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY**  
**Mohawk College Academic Offences Form**

This form will be completed by the faculty member, signed by the Course Associate Dean or Vice President and forwarded to the Registrar (Fennell Campus) when an incident of academic dishonesty has occurred. A copy of this form must also be provided to the students.

**STUDENT INFORMATION**

Student #:	Student Name:
Course Section #:	Program Name:

**DESCRIPTION OF THE OFFENCE**

Offence discovered by: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Course Faculty Member: \_\_\_\_\_

Date discussed with student: \_\_\_\_\_

Date the offence occurred: \_\_\_\_\_

Oral warning:  First Offence:       Second Offence:       Third Offence:

**Type of Offence** *[please check the appropriate box below]*

- Plagiarism
- Submitting an essay, assignment, etc. of another as one's own work, or permitting one's work to be submitted under the name of another student
- Falsifying research data or other material in an essay or assignment
- Unauthorized submission of one's own academic work for which credit has already been obtained, or is being sought
- Copying from another student in an assignment, test or examination situation, or knowingly permitting a student to copy
- Possession of unauthorized materials or aids in a test or examination
- Unauthorized and unreported possession, however obtained, of an examination or test in advance
- Inappropriate use of computer technology to obtain an unauthorized academic advantage on an assignment, test or examination
- Impersonating a candidate in an examination or test, or allowing someone to impersonate you during a test or examination
- Falsifying an academic credential.
- Other  (Please Explain)

