INTEGRITY IN RESEARCH AND SCHOLARSHIP POLICY

This document is the parent policy for any college or Divisional procedures. Questions regarding this policy are to be directed to the identified Policy Administrator.

Functional Category:	Academic
Approval Date:	January 29, 2020
Effective Date:	February 1, 2020
Policy Owner:	Vice President, Teaching and Learning
Policy Administrator:	Dean, Research and Strategic Enrolment

Objective:

To strengthen the role of NorQuest College (college) as a comprehensive community institution, a leader in workforce preparation, and an exemplar in social and industry innovation, the college expects its faculty, staff, students, and community partners to cultivate and maintain the highest standards of research and scholarship integrity.

The college recognizes that in order to gain the most benefit from its research and innovation activities and to promote a positive research and innovation environment, researchers must be held fully accountable for honest inquiry, rigorous analysis, and commitment to the productive dissemination of results toward improving knowledge throughout business, industry, and the community locally, nationally, and internationally.

The college expects its faculty, staff, and students to adhere to the college Codes of Conduct and perform research and scholarly work in accordance with the federal *Tri-Agency Framework: Responsible Conduct of Research*, at minimum.

The principles of research integrity apply to all facets of research, including the appropriate use of research funding, recognition of conflicts of interest, respect for intellectual property, the use of culturally appropriate research methodologies, sound data management planning, and the need for community consultation, as well as the protection of the safety, welfare, and the social, cultural, political, and economic rights of research participants, their communities, and other research partners.

The college also recognizes its role in preventing and effectively dealing with issues of misconduct in the carrying out and dissemination of research, and with protecting the privacy of individuals making allegations of misconduct.

Authority to establish this policy is derived from the [NorQuest College Board of Governor's Policy No. 5](), which delegates authority to the President and CEO to establish policies and procedures for the college's management and operation.

Policy:

Research and Scholarly Integrity
NorQuest College (college) is committed to the highest standards of integrity in research and scholarship, beginning with three fundamental principles:
- *Truthfulness* in describing the manner in which research is conducted and data are collected, analyzed, and reported;
- *Scrupulousness* in recognizing the authors and sources of the original research concepts and results; and
- *Probity* in the use of research funds.

The college expects its researchers to fully understand and apply these principles. The college holds accountable its faculty, staff, students, and external partners to its codes of conduct, and expects that they perform research, innovation activities, and scholarly work with the highest ethical and scientific standards of academic integrity. Maintaining integrity requires careful supervision of research and innovation activities, including those conducted by students; informed and transparent use of methods; adherence to ethical standards of the discipline; and refusal to engage in or condone instances of misconduct.

The college supports the responsibilities of researchers in promoting research and scholarly integrity. These responsibilities require that the researcher undertake:

- **Honest and irreproachable professional conduct** with colleagues and coworkers in the scholarly community, with faculty, students, and staff involved in research and innovation projects, and in dealings with project and funding collaborators within and outside the education community. This includes managing real and perceived conflicts of interest. Abuse of supervisory power affecting coworkers, students, and others associated with research and innovation projects is considered misconduct.
- **Due regard for the ethical considerations** involved in the use of human participants and animal subjects in research. Ethical considerations in the use of human participants are outlined in the college's *Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Human Participants* Policy, and researchers who breach conditions under that policy are, under the present policy, held responsible for research misconduct. Clinical trials and research involving animals may not be approved by the colleges' Research Ethics Board, but must be reviewed by the Research Ethics Boards (REB) of partnering organizations. Failure to have projects reviewed by all necessary REBs will be considered misconduct.
- **Honest and accurate reporting** to the college and associated jurisdictions of any involvement in research dealing with human participants, bio-hazardous materials, or animals. This includes the proactive rectification of breaches and inaccurate reporting to all relevant stakeholders impacted including, but not limited to, project participants, the approving REB, the College's Research Administrator, and the funding body.
- **Compliant and transparent use of funds** acquired for research and innovation activities, and adherence to terms and conditions of grants and contracts, as well as college policies and procedures.
- **Methodologically rigorous, discipline-recognized, and culturally appropriate approaches to research** proposals and to carrying out research activities, including collecting, recording, analyzing, and interpreting data, and reporting and publishing findings. Fabrication of data, sources (including partner collaboration), methodologies, or findings are considered serious misconduct.
- **Developing a sound data management plan (DMP)** that reflects current best practices in the collection, documentation, formatting, protection, and preservation of data, metadata, and code associated with the research results and publications, including compliance with agency requirements for online digital repositories.

- *Maintaining complete and accurate data records, methodologies, and findings, including graphs and images,* in accordance with funding and partner agreements, institutional policies, government legislation, and professional/discipline standards in a manner that will allow others to verify and/or replicate the research if required. Willful misrepresentation or misinterpretation (manipulation or falsification) of data, methodology, or findings, including graphs and images, as well as destruction or concealment of research data in order to circumvent funding policy, Research Ethics Boards' requirements, college Code of Conduct, contract agreements, legislation, or professional standards are considered misconduct.
- *Accurate referencing of previous published and unpublished work,* and acquiring permission for and acknowledging the use and/or adaptation of such work (data, methodologies, findings, graphs, images), including traditional knowledge. Researchers will be held to the highest standards with respect to fair use and intellectual property, and plagiarism of any kind is considered a breach of this policy. This includes self-plagiarism, the republication of previously published work or part thereof, including data, without adequate acknowledgement of the source or justification of the redundancy.[1]
- *Recognition of the relevant contributions of others*, including scholars, research assistants, or students. Researchers are expected to give authorial recognition to those who have made a substantive contribution to the research and its publication, in a manner consistent with their contributions and with publisher authorship guidelines. Inaccurate attribution of authorship (including listing as authors those who made no substantive contribution) is considered a breach of this policy.
- *Acknowledging all relevant contributors to research* (writers, funders, sponsors, and collaborators). Failure to recognize contributors or the inaccurate representation of the nature of their contributions are considered misconduct.
- *Acknowledging who accepts responsibility for the contents of a publication.* Principal investigators/lead authors are expected to accept responsibility for the integrity and ethical ramifications of published work.
- *Fair reviewing* of research grant applications and/or research work submitted for peer review in consideration for publication or funding by another scholar. Suppression of the work of another scholar is considered misconduct under this policy.
- *Due diligence with respect to existing or potential conflicts of interest*. Full disclosure of any real, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest is expected, and failure to manage real, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest is considered misconduct.

Research and Scholarly Misconduct

The college regards any action that is inconsistent with integrity as misconduct. The college accepts its responsibility to investigate all allegations of misconduct in research, innovation, and scholarship and to impose discipline where warranted. Allegations of misconduct shall be dealt with in a fair, unbiased, and timely manner.

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[1] Secretariat on Responsible Conduct of Research. (2016). *Tri-Agency Framework: Responsible Conduct of Research.* Retrieved from http://www.rcr.ethics.gc.Tca/eng/framework-cadre.html#a3-1

The following are considered misconduct in research and scholarship and breaches of the Tri-Agency Research Integrity Policy:

- Any fabrication of research materials, including methodologies and findings.
- Any falsification of research materials, including manipulating or omitting data without appropriate explanation of the manipulation or omission and which results in inaccurate findings.[2]
- Any destruction of research records that fails to comply with the college' Records Management Policy and funder's requirements.
- Plagiarism and self-plagiarism.
- Inaccurate attribution of authorship on any publications or resulting research products. This includes failing to acknowledge the contributions of those who significantly contributed to the project's implementation.
- Mismanagement of conflict of interest.
- Any misrepresentation on any grant funding or documentation. This includes applying for funding for which one is ineligible and listing co-investigators who have not granted permission.
- Any use of research funding that does not comply with college policy and/or funder requirements.

Misconduct does not include honest errors, differences in opinion, or different interpretations of research findings. Additionally, those involved in judging research and scholarly misconduct must bear in mind the ethical sensitivities of the period, cultural context, and discipline in which the original research was conducted: although a researcher may have conscientiously followed the standards of the period, culture, and discipline, protocols previously in use may not necessarily accord with current research standards or the standards of other disciplines.

Researchers, research assistants, students, partners, and other faculty and staff who identify any circumstances which they believe involve a breach of the college *Integrity in Research and Scholarship* policy or procedure have an obligation to report it, in writing, to the college's designated Research Administrator (the Associate Dean of Research) and the Vice President of Teaching and Learning. An exact copy of the allegation will be forwarded to the Secretariat for the Responsible Conduct of Research by the Research Administrator.

The college adheres to the principle of confidentiality that protects the privacy of complainants and respondents in allegations of misconduct. In accordance with the college's *Safe Disclosure Policy*, the college further shields from reprisals—any response by the college that adversely affects the employment or other status of the complainant—any individuals who in good faith report suspected misconduct. Anonymous allegations are taken seriously, but it is important that sufficient information be provided to enable assessment of the allegation and credibility of the evidence that form its basis, without need for further information from the complainant.

The college will investigate potential instances of misconduct in research or scholarship; may impose appropriate sanctions in accordance with college policy; and will inform the Tri-Agency or other funding body of the actions taken to address the misconduct. In the event that the research is connected to Tri-Agency funding, the college will comply with Tri-

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[2] This excludes instances where select research data is excluded or modified to protect the identity of participants. Where such an omission or modifications are made, the researcher must clear state that data was omitted and/or modified and provide the rationale for the exclusion or modification. In all cases, omission and modification cannot impact the findings or conclusions drawn from the research.

Agency requirements regarding the reporting of misconduct. This includes taking immediate action to protect the research funding. Should the allegation claim the misconduct occurred at another institution, the college's Research Administrator will contact that organization and determine which institution will investigate the allegation and will collaborate with them as appropriate.

Investigations into allegations of student misconduct will be conducted by the Office of Student Judicial Affairs (OSJA). All other investigations will be conducted by a committee that is struck following the reporting of academic misconduct. The committee will consist of:

- The Associate Dean, Research;
- The Dean, Research and Strategic Enrolment;
- At least one external member who has no current affiliation with the institution;
- The immediate supervisor of the individual reported to have engaged in academic misconduct; and
- Their Dean.

In cases of severe academic misconduct (i.e., a 'serious breach' of policy) where dismissal from the college may result, the committee will also include:

- The Vice-President, Brand & External Affairs
- Corporate Counsel;
- A representative from People; and
- The Vice-President, Teaching and Learning and Chief Academic Officer

The Research Administrator will determine the validity of the allegation and, if an honest error, will work with the researcher to rectify the situation. If the allegation is deemed valid and deliberate, the OSJA, in the case of students, and an ad hoc committee, in the case of employees or external researchers, will investigate the misconduct in a timely manner. They will also determine the appropriate disciplinary actions, provide opportunity for appeal, and communication final decisions to all appropriate stakeholders. Disciplinary actions for misconduct may range from the issue of a warning to dismissal from the college (faculty and staff) or expulsion (students). Misconduct may further be subject to investigation and response by the funding agency and/or legal authorities.

In the event of a breach of Agency policy, the Agency may request the college take additional steps outlined in accordance with *the Tri-Agency Framework: Responsible Conduct of Research* policy.

| Definitions: | **Breach**: "A breach of the RCR Framework is the failure to comply with any Agency policy throughout the life cycle of a research project – from application for funding, to the conduct of the research and the dissemination of research results. It includes all activities related to the research, including the management of Agency funds."[3] |

Conflict of interest: "A conflict of interest may arise when activities or situations place an individual in a real, potential or perceived conflict between the duties or responsibilities related to research, and personal, institutional or other interests. These interests include, but are not limited

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[3] Tri-Agency Framework: Responsible Conduct of Research

to, business, commercial or financial interests pertaining to the individual, their family members, friends, or their former, current or prospective professional associates."[4]

Plagiarism: "Presenting and using another's published or unpublished work, including theories, concepts, data, source material, methodologies, or findings, including graphs and images, as one's own, without appropriate referencing and, if required, without permission."[5]

Self-Plagiarism: also referred to as redundant publication: "The republication of one's own previously published work or part thereof, including data, in any language, without adequate acknowledgement of the source"[6] or justification for its use.

Serious breach: a serious breach is determined by "the extent to which the breach jeopardizes the safety of the public or brings the conduct of research into disrepute. This determination will be based on an assessment of the nature of the breach, the level of experience of the researcher, whether there is a pattern of breaches by the researcher, and other factors as appropriate. Examples of serious breaches may include:

- Recruiting human participants into a study with significant risks or harms without Research Ethics Board approval, or not following approved protocols;
- Using animals in a study with significant risks or harms without Animal Care Committee approval, or not following approved protocols;
- Deliberate misuse of research grant funds for personal benefit not related to research;
- Knowingly publishing research results based on fabricated data;
- Obtaining grant/award funds from the Agencies by misrepresenting one's credentials, qualifications and/or research contributions in an application." [7]

Related NorQuest College Information:	• Code of Conduct Policy • Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Human Participants Policy • Integrity in Research and Scholarship Procedure • Intellectual Property Policy (to be developed) • Safe Disclosure Policy • Safe Disclosure Procedure
Related External Information:	• *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act Policy* • Tri-Agency Framework: Responsible Conduct of Research
Next Review Date:	December 2024

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[4] Tri-Agency Framework: Responsible Conduct of Research
[5] Tri-Agency Framework: Responsible Conduct of Research
[6] Tri-Agency Framework: Responsible Conduct of Research
[7] Tri-Agency Framework: Responsible Conduct of Research

Revision History:	January 2013: new
	August 2013: update for document links and branding
	November 2014: update for change in policy administrator and document links
	June 2017: updated
	February 2019: update to document links and policy/procedure title changes
	August 2019: Compliance Office template & reorganization update
	January 2020: update to reflect new federal requirements