



**Academic Decision Review  
Process**

Procedure No.:	5104-PR1
Policy Reference:	5104
Category:	Education
Department Responsible:	Education
Current Approved Date:	2010 May 25

**Objectives**

This procedure applies directly to Policy 5104, Academic Integrity and Appeals. This document contains an overview of the procedures to be followed for:

- Reviews of grades-related decisions (Diagram 1)
- Investigation, decision-making, and reviews of decisions on matters of academic misconduct (Diagram 2)

It then further provides the detailed processes for:

- The first two levels of review of grades-related decisions
- Investigation and decisions on matters of academic misconduct

The other procedures associated with Policy 5104 provide the details regarding further levels of review for both types of decisions.

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**Who Does This Procedure Apply To?**

This procedure applies to BCIT students, instructors, and other employees.

**Other Information**

Other Procedures associated with Policy 5104:

- 5104-PR2 – Decision Review Boards
- 5104-PR3 – Institutional Appeal Tribunal
- 5100-PR1 – Student Reports/Student Performance Contracts

## **Procedures**

When students are dissatisfied with decisions regarding grades or with decisions regarding allegations of academic misconduct, they may request a review of these decisions. For grades-related decisions, there are four possible levels of review; and for academic misconduct decisions, up to two levels of review are possible.

Examples of student work or standing that would be subject to a grades-related decision (Diagram 1) are:

- A mid-term or final exam
- A major project
- Practicum or directed studies results
- A final grade for a course
- Academic standing based on grades

Examples of behaviours that would be subject to an academic misconduct decision (Diagram 2) are:

- Cheating
- Plagiarism

Additional activities, such as the following, could also be subject to an academic misconduct decision.

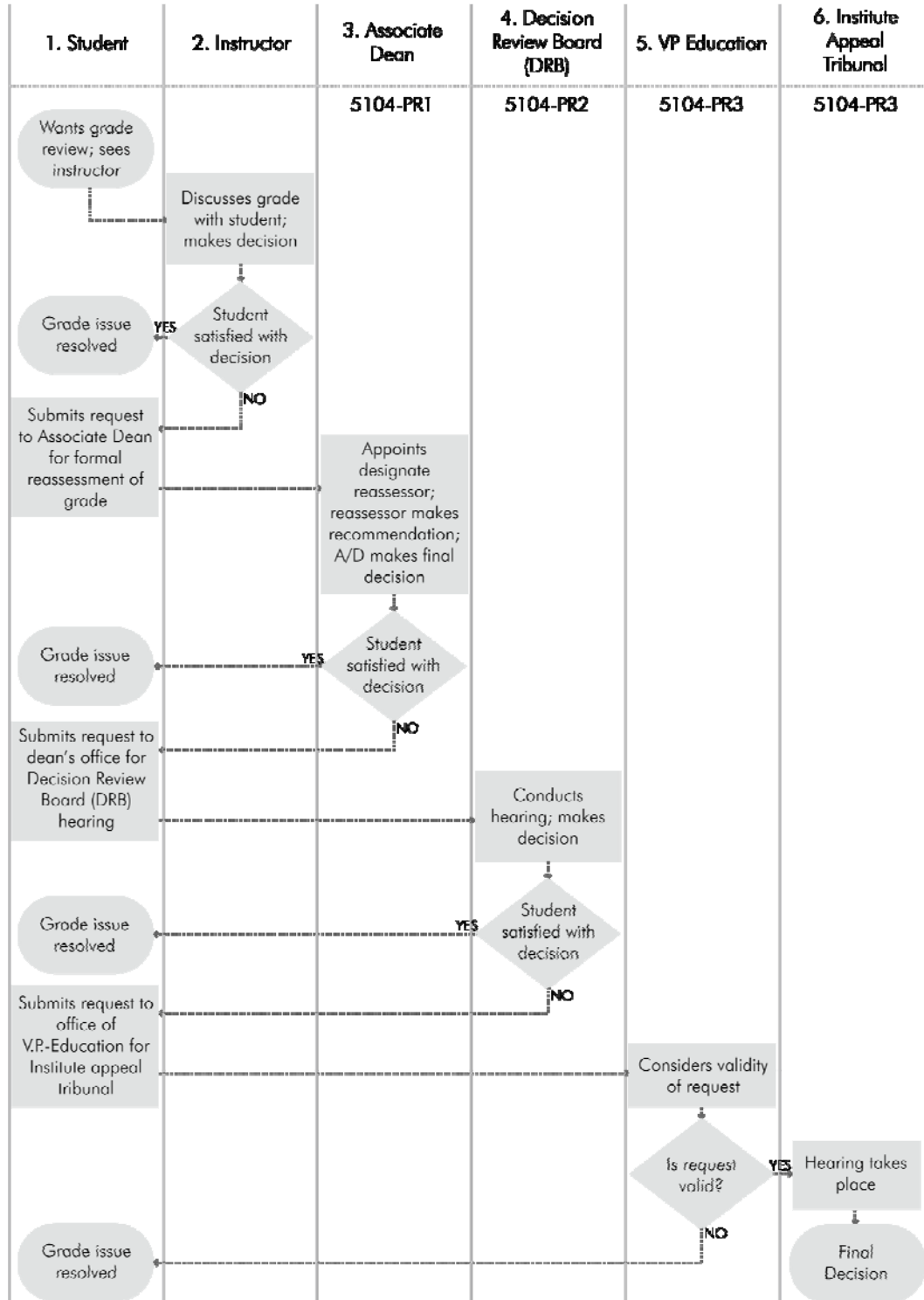
- Shop safety violations
- Behavioural issues

However, at the discretion of the dean and the Director of Safety and Security, these issues could also be addressed according to BCIT policy 5102, Student Code of Conduct.

Grades-Related Decisions

Diagram 1 – Grades-Related Decision Review Process

This diagram shows the process flow for requesting reviews of grades-related decisions.



For grades-related decision reviews, the process is normally a review of a mid-term or final exam, a final practical work assignment, or major project, etc. and examines the final grade/standing issued by Student Records. Students are encouraged to bring any requests for review and perceptions of marking irregularities to the attention of their instructor in a timely manner rather than waiting until the end of the course.

There are four major steps to this type of review:

- a) Informal review by instructor
- b) Formal request for reassessment
- c) Request for Decision Review Board (DRB) (Procedure 5104-PR2)
- d) Institute Appeal Tribunal (Procedure 5104-PR3)

Steps “a” & “b” are collectively referred to as “marks reassessment.” They are intended for the resolution of more detailed marks determination issues.

Step “a” is an informal review. Step “b,” is a formal review, and can be initiated by a student if unsatisfied with the outcome of step “a.”

Step “c” is also a formal step and will only be available if steps “a” & “b” have been completed and the outcome is still not to the satisfaction of the student. In addition, step “c” is generally reserved for the resolution of more substantive issues such as fairness of academic decisions.

Step “d” is only available in the following very limited circumstances:

- The process by which the DRB decision was made was deemed to be unfair in that it violated the principles of natural justice; OR
- There is new evidence which was not available at the time that the Decision Review Board (DRB) decision was made, and which could have changed that decision; OR
- The penalty imposed by the DRB is unfair when compared to the penalties associated with similar previous incidents.

### **Informal Review by Instructor**

(See columns 1 and 2, Diagram 1.)

Students who wish a reassessment of their academic standing must first discuss the matter with the instructor responsible for the initial assessment. The instructor must review the mid-term or final exam, assessment, or project/practical work, and check the calculation of the grade, to clarify why the student was awarded the grade.

The student should document their understanding of this meeting and forward it to the instructor for confirmation.

Distance education students should contact their instructor in the normal manner that has been established for their course whenever possible. If additional assistance is required, the student should contact the program area of study to arrange for appropriate contact.

If there is no satisfactory resolution resulting from this discussion with the instructor, a student may submit a formal Request for Reassessment.

### **Formal Request for Reassessment**

(See columns 1 and 3, Diagram 1.)

#### ***The Student***

1. Students seeking the next level of review should pick up the “Request for Marks Reassessment” application form, which is available from the office of the teaching associate dean responsible for the program/course in question.
2. The student completes the Marks Reassessment form. In filling out the form, it is up to the student to:
  - provide complete and accurate information

- Clearly state the reasons for the request for reassessment

*Requests may be denied if any one of these requirements has not been completed.*

3. The student takes the completed form to Student Information and Enrolment Services (SIES) at the Registrar's Office, to pay the required reassessment fee. (Please refer to < [www.bcit.ca/admission/fees](http://www.bcit.ca/admission/fees) > on the BCIT web site for fee details). This fee will be returned to the student if the mark is adjusted in favour of the student.
4. The student returns the following to the office of the associate dean responsible for the program/course:
  - The completed "Request for Reassessment" application
  - A copy of the reassessment fee receipt (from SIES)
  - All appropriate course work to be included in the reassessment i.e., reports, assignments, quizzes, labs etc. (which would have been returned by the instructor). If the mid-term or final exam is to be considered, the student must request that it be provided, and the Department will supply the exam.

### ***Time Limits and Extensions***

The completed "Request for Reassessment" application and associated materials must be received by the teaching associate dean's office within five (5) business days after the start of classes in the next term or within twenty (20) business days after the final marks are available, whichever occurs earlier.

In cases where the student was unable to contact the instructor for an informal marks review before the deadline for a formal request for reassessment, the student must be prepared to provide evidence that he or she attempted to do so in a timely manner.

When documentary evidence of extenuating circumstances is provided to the teaching associate dean by the student or department, extension of the stated time limits may be allowed to provide for work completion. The teaching associate dean will determine a suitable extension and will communicate that decision to the student and to the department.

### ***When a Grade for a Prerequisite Course is Reassessed***

Where the course being reassessed is a pre-requisite to another course in which a student wants to enrol, the program associate dean will permit the student to enrol and fully participate in the subsequent course. The student must pay all current and outstanding fees and must have fulfilled all other academic requirements associated with this desired course. If the reassessment result favours the student, then the student may continue in the course; if not, then the student must withdraw.

If the reassessment favours the student, the program associate dean must ensure that the normal guidelines used by Marks Review Committees are applied, in case the outcome of the reassessment has the potential to change the status of the student.

### ***Conducting the Reassessment***

#### **Teaching associate dean and reassessor**

The teaching associate dean is to carry out the following activities within ten (10) business days of receiving the Request for Reassessment:

1. The associate dean will identify a designate to act as the reassessor.
2. The reassessor:
  - Will be chosen based on knowledge of the subject matter as well as knowledge of BCIT's requirements, practices and the delivery methods associated with the course in question.
  - Must not have been associated with the original evaluation

The teaching associate dean will turn over any documents received from the student. Reassessment of the material may include examination of other relevant documentation, and will be conducted in accordance with department guidelines.

3. The associate dean will ensure that all grades placed on the materials to be reviewed have been removed or obliterated before the materials are provided to the re-assessor.
4. The associate dean will provide the reassessor with copies of all marking guides, etc., used in the initial grading.
5. The re-assessor may discuss any aspect of the reassessment with the student or course instructor, or any other individual who was involved in the original assessment, to clarify matters, while being careful to maintain complete objectivity in the process.
6. The reassessor will prepare a report with recommendations and submit it to the associate dean.
7. Upon the receipt of the reassessment report, the associate dean will:
  - a) Review the report and recommendation to ensure that the reassessment followed established procedures, and is consistent with Institute policy
  - b) Make the final decision
  - c) Within five business days, notify the student, in writing, of the reassessment outcome as it pertains to his or her grade and standing in the program
  - d) Within five business days, advise the course instructor, program head, and Registrar of the reassessment result. This advice is to include a final course grade and information regarding the student's standing in the program.
8. If the teaching associate dean and the program associate dean are separate persons, the teaching associate dean will inform the program associate dean of the result of the reassessment.

### ***Records***

The associate dean will compile a record of the reassessment and forward it to the Registrar, who will include the reassessment correspondence as part of the student's permanent record.

### **Requesting a Decision Review Board (DRB) Hearing**

(See columns 1 and 4, Diagram 1.)

When students disagree with the results of a formal reassessment in a grade-related decision, they may request a review of the decision by a Decision Review Board (DRB). The DRB provides an unbiased second look at a decision, and it will review the evidence and procedures used. The

procedure for requesting this level of review is found in Procedure 5104-PR2, Decision Review Boards.

**Institute Appeal Tribunal**

(See columns 1, 5, and 6, Diagram 1.)

In limited circumstances, students who are unsatisfied with the results of a Decision Review Board hearing may request a hearing by an Institute Appeal Tribunal. There are three, and only three, acceptable grounds for requesting an Institute Appeal Tribunal:

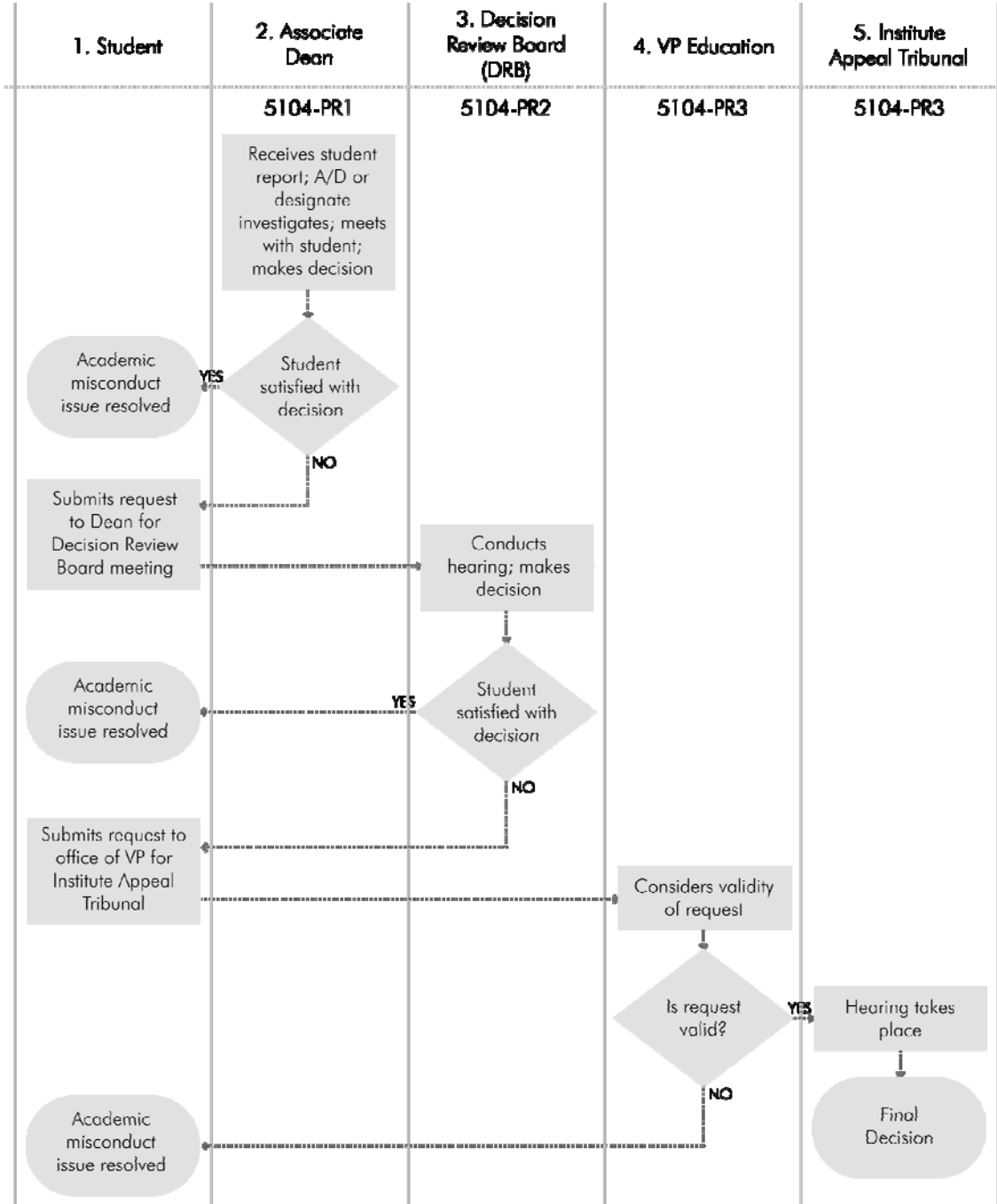
1. The decision-making process used by the DRB was deemed to be unfair in that it violated the principles of natural justice; OR
2. There is new evidence which could have changed the DRB decision if available at the time of the hearing; OR
3. The penalty imposed by the DRB is unfair.

Detailed information regarding Institutional Appeal Tribunals is located in Procedure 5104-PR3 – Institutional Appeal Tribunals.

Academic Misconduct Decisions

Diagram 2–Academic Misconduct Decision Review Process

This diagram shows the process flow for requesting reviews of academic misconduct-related decisions.





Academic misconduct decisions typically involve issues such as: cheating and plagiarism, or shop safety violations. BCIT may choose to pursue some conduct-related matters according to policy 5102, Student Code of Conduct (Non-academic), whether or not they occurred in an academic setting.

There are 3 major steps that could be involved in academic misconduct decisions and reviews. They are:

- a) Investigation
- b) Decision Review Board (DRB) (Procedure 5104-PR2)
- c) Appeal Tribunal (Procedure 5104-PR3)

**Not all steps are required, or applicable, in every case.**

### **Investigation**

(See columns 1 and 2, Diagram 2.)

In the case of alleged inappropriate behaviour on the part of the student, the matter is reported via a "Student Report." Refer to Procedure 5101-PR1, Student Reports-Student Performance Contracts, for more information on this document.

All allegations of academic misconduct should be reported promptly to the program associate dean, and all substantiating documentation and evidence forwarded to her/him.

#### **The program associate dean:**

1. Advises the student(s) in writing of any allegation against him or her within two (2) weeks of receipt of the report of misconduct
2. Provides the student with copies of all information, data, and evidence that substantiates the allegation
3. Conducts an investigation personally or appoints an investigator to do so. The choice of investigator will depend on the nature of the allegations. In situations where the program associate dean and the teaching associate dean are separate persons, the two individuals will conduct the investigation jointly.
4. The program associate dean (and teaching associate dean if different), or the designated investigator will convene a meeting in which the student will have the opportunity to state his or her recollection of the events. Finding a mutually agreeable resolution will be the goal.
5. The program associate dean (through consultation with the teaching associate dean if different), or the appointed investigator, will render a decision once all documentation and evidence has been reviewed. The decision will be based on the merits of the case.
6. If the allegation is well founded, then before making a decision, the program associate dean (and teaching associate dean if different) will research the student's permanent file in Student Records to determine if previous infractions have occurred. If the allegation is unfounded, the matter will be dismissed.
7. In all cases, the student will be advised, in writing, of the decision. The advisement will describe the appeal options available to the student.
8. The associate dean advises the dean as well as the Vice-President–Education of any sanctions to be applied against the student.

### **Decision Review Board**

(See columns 1 and 3, Diagram 2.)

When students disagree with the results of a formal reassessment in an academic misconduct-related decision, they may request a review of the decision by a Decision Review Board (DRB). The DRB provides an unbiased second look at a decision, and it will review the evidence and

procedures used. The procedure for requesting this level of review is found in Procedure 5104-PR2, Decision Review Boards.

**Institute Appeal Tribunal**

(See columns 1, 4, and 5, Diagram 2.)

In limited circumstances, students who are unsatisfied with the results of a Decision Review Board hearing may request a hearing by an Institute Appeal Tribunal. There are three, and only three, acceptable grounds for requesting an Institute Appeal Tribunal:

1. The decision-making process used by the DRB was deemed to be unfair in that it violated the principles of natural justice; OR
2. There is new evidence which could have changed the DRB decision if available at the time of the hearing; OR
3. The penalty imposed by the DRB is unfair.

Detailed information regarding Institutional Appeal Tribunals is located in Procedure 5104-PR3 – Institutional Appeal Tribunals.

**Forms Associated With This Procedure**

See Procedures 5104-PR2 and 5104-PR3.

**Amendment History**

1. Created            2009 JAN 16
2. Amended        2010 MAY 25