

AC204: Academic Appeals

Policy Title:	Academic Appeals
Policy Number:	AC204
Owner:	Sr. Vice President, Academic and Student Success
Approved by:	Senior Leadership Team
Effective Date:	September 2026
Reference:	
See also:	Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities Policy Academic Assessment Policy Academic Progression Policy Academic Integrity Policy Student Code of Conduct Student Complaint Policy

St. Lawrence College is committed to making our resources fully accessible to all persons. This document will be made available in alternative format upon request.

BACKGROUND

Definitions:

See a full list of definitions in Appendix A.

Purpose:

This policy outlines the guiding principles under which a student may initiate an Academic Appeal if they feel an academic decision was not fair or accurate. Academic Appeals provide a mechanism for reasonable review of academic decisions.

St. Lawrence College (the “College”) strives to facilitate a learning environment where learning outcomes are impartially assessed using evidence-based teaching methodology, and where academic decisions are made in a manner that is free of bias, prejudice, unfairness or other inappropriate personal or systemic influences. The College is responsible for maintaining standards that promote academic integrity and student success.

This policy is based upon the concept of collaborative resolution and the principles of procedural fairness. Should a student perceive that an academic decision has not been

fair or accurate, College Employees share a common interest in resolving the dispute in a professional, transparent, and timely manner.

A Student may appeal an eligible academic decision when the grounds for Academic Appeal outlined in this policy are met.

Scope:

This policy applies to all Students and Employees involved in Assessments, grading, and academic decisions at the College.

Matters related to disability-related academic accommodations will be referred to Student Wellness & Accessibility.

Matters related to missed Assessments due to personal extenuating or extraordinary circumstances will be addressed under the Academic Assessment Policy Section 13. Examples of extenuating or extraordinary circumstances may include, but are not limited to, accidents, significant acute illness, court appearances, hospitalization, and bereavement.

Matters related to non-academic misconduct will be addressed under the Student Code of Conduct.

POLICY STATEMENTS

1. Students shall be assessed consistently and impartially by Faculty, in keeping with the stated evaluation criteria noted in the Learning Plan and the Academic Assessment Policy.
2. Academic decisions are presumed accurate and appropriate. It is a student's responsibility to demonstrate otherwise.
3. Only the following types of academic decisions are eligible for appeal:
 - 3.1. A grade received for a single assessment, including non-numeric grades (i.e. Pass/Fail), and excluding the final grade for a course;
 - 3.2. An academic decision regarding a clinical, co-op or field placement course (e.g. Removal, Requirements Met/Requirements Not Met, G/NG);
 - 3.3. A finding of misconduct under the Academic Integrity Policy; or
 - 3.4. An academic decision under the Academic Progression Policy, including probation and withdrawal.

4. If the academic decision is eligible for appeal per Section 3 above, a student may submit an Academic Appeal only if their situation meets one or both permitted grounds listed below.
 - 4.1. **Merit of Work:** The academic decision does not accurately or fairly represent the student's performance in the academic work under review (e.g. a grade that doesn't accurately reflect the stated assessment criteria).
 - 4.2. **Procedural Error:** A College policy, procedure, or rule was overlooked or misapplied in making the academic decision (e.g., an academic progression decision was inconsistent with the relevant policy).
5. Disagreement with an academic decision is not grounds for an Academic Appeal.
6. The College reserves the right to dismiss an Academic Appeal at any step of the process, if:
 - 6.1. The academic decision is not eligible to appeal per Section 3 above;
 - 6.2. The submission does not meet the grounds to appeal per Section 4 above;
 - 6.3. The submission was made after the Appeal deadline had passed; or
 - 6.4. The student has failed to provide a complete submission or compelling justification for their Appeal to be considered.
7. When an Academic Appeal is dismissed, the process ends. The student will receive written communication that the Appeal has been dismissed.
8. A separate Academic Appeal must be initiated for each academic decision under appeal.
9. Group Academic Appeals may be pursued by students who participated in a group Assessment and received the same grade, following the same process as an individual Academic Appeal. All group members must agree to pursue the Appeal and be listed on the Academic Appeal Form.
10. While an Academic Appeal is in process, the student(s) may continue in their regular program of study unless prohibited by the Dean or other designated administrator in cases where there are issues of liability, safety or where the learning of others may be at risk.
11. Any student is allowed to have a support person present at any level of the Academic Appeal process.
12. All parties may access the Student Rights & Responsibilities Office (SRRO) at any point in the Academic Appeal process for guidance. The role of the SRRO is to provide unbiased guidance on the process. The SRRO will not advocate on either party's behalf.

13. All parties will engage in the Academic Appeal process in good faith and can do so without fear of retaliation or reprisal.
14. All parties to an Academic Appeal are entitled to procedural fairness in the process, including:
 - 14.1. The right to know an Appeal has commenced;
 - 14.2. The opportunity to review all information being considered;
 - 14.3. The opportunity to be heard;
 - 14.4. The right to an unbiased decision-maker; and
 - 14.5. The right to reasons for the decision.
15. Decisions under this Policy will be based on the balance of probabilities. This means that the decision-maker will determine whether it is more likely than not the academic decision was impacted by the grounds, per Section 4 above.
16. While the College will make every effort to adhere to the timelines outlined in the Academic Appeal Procedures, the College reserves the right to extend timelines in extenuating circumstances .
17. The College reserves the right to make minor changes, when necessary, to the Academic Appeal Procedures.

MONITORING

Senior Vice President, Academic and Student Success

NEXT POLICY REVISION DATE

September 2031

SPECIFIC LINKS

[Academic Appeals Procedures](#)

APPENDIX A

Definitions:

1. **Assessment:** The process of gathering and interpreting evidence to determine learner progression in a learning process, achievement of Learning Outcomes, and to provide feedback.
2. **Assigned Dean:** The academic administrator assigned to hear the Academic Appeal.

3. **Day / Business Day:** Any day that the College is open for normal business, excluding weekends, statutory holidays, and any other day the College is closed per the St. Lawrence College academic calendar.
4. **Dean:** An academic administrator who oversees the student's program of study (i.e. a Dean or an Associate Dean).
5. **Employee:** A full-time or part-time College support staff, faculty, or administrator.
6. **Faculty:** A professor, instructor, placement supervisor or preceptor, who is an employee or agent of the College.
7. **Grade:** The College is accountable for evaluating student achievement based on established standards, and for communicating these results. The assigning of college-defined grades formalizes a student's status within a course and/or program and provides a basis for decisions regarding recognition of excellence, promotion, academic probation, and withdrawal.
8. **Student:** Anyone who is registered, full-time or part-time, in a course or program of study, including a non-degree diploma or certificate (whether for credit or not) and online courses, offered by or through the College, or who was enrolled in the previous semester.
9. **Support Person:** An individual that may be invited by the student to attend any meetings, including those associated with an investigation, decision, or Academic Appeal, to provide personal support to an individual. A Support Person may offer support and guidance to a student with respect to the process, but does not advocate, represent, or speak on behalf of the student. A Support Person may not be, or have the potential to be, a witness in the process. The use of an interpreter or accessibility support person is treated as separate and apart from the role of a support person.