



Academic Integrity

1 Preamble

- 1.1 Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) advance by building on and acknowledging the work of others. YSC expects STEM projects to be the original work of students and to acknowledge the sources of any content that is the work of others. YSC is committed to the highest standards of academic integrity and does not tolerate academic misconduct associated with STEM projects.

2 Academic Misconduct

- 2.1 “Academic misconduct is any behaviour, intentional or otherwise, that gives a student unearned or unfair advantage in academic work over other students.”¹ This includes plagiarism, self-plagiarism and falsifying data.

- 2.2 **Plagiarism** is committed when you do not acknowledge using someone else’s work. Plagiarized material can come from any source including encyclopedias, web pages, books, journal articles, email, talks, lectures, etc.

Examples of plagiarism include:

- a) Failure to attribute authorship when using words, phrases, ideas, or thoughts of others such as written or oral work, computer code/software, experimental results, artistic works, STEM projects, graphical representations, diagrams, videos, and images.
 - b) Downloading all or part of the work of another from the Internet and submitting it as your own.
 - c) Submitting a document or project prepared by anyone other than yourself.
 - d) Using a sentence or phrase from someone else’s work without putting it in quotation marks and citing the source of the phrase.
- 2.3 **Self-plagiarism** is the reuse of content from your own previously submitted work, including all or part of a previous STEM project, without acknowledging that it has been previously submitted.
- a) CWSF rules do not allow for the reuse of a project presented in a previous year. Accordingly, even if a project is a continuation of a prior year’s project, content from a previous project should not be reused, but a summary of previous work should be presented to make it clear what was previously found and what is new.
- 2.4 **Falsifying data** includes the presentation of experimental or other results that have been deliberately altered, fabricated, or incompletely presented.

3 Canada-Wide Science Fair (CWSF) Process

- 3.1 This process will be activated by an allegation of academic misconduct against a CWSF finalist. The allegation cannot be anonymous and must provide initial details. It may come from a member of the community, the CWSF judging team’s review of projects including the use of academic integrity software tools, or CWSF judges during the CWSF.

- 3.2 Once the process is activated the matter will be kept as confidential as possible and only those persons identified in the policy will be privy to the particulars of the allegation and ensuing process. At the outset, the YSC office will be notified of the allegation to ensure that no awards or prize monies are given to a finalist until the matter has been resolved.
- 3.3 Information about the potential violation will be compiled by the manager of the judging team, or other person assigned by Executive Director. This information will be as complete as possible and will be provided to the hearing panel through the Executive Director.
- 3.4 A hearing panel will be comprised of a Chair, appointed by the Executive Director, a judging person appointed by the National Judge-in-Chief and a member of the Board of Directors. Panel members shall not have been involved in gathering information about the allegation. The Executive Director shall replace ineligible members with appropriately qualified people.
- 3.5 In a timely fashion, the panel will meet and recommend action to the Executive Director. Prior to the CWSF, they will normally render a decision within one week and in time to change travel plans if required. During the CWSF, the panel will normally render a decision before the awards ceremony. After the CWSF, the panel will normally render a decision within 10 working days. Any delays to these times must be discussed with, and approved by, the Executive Director.
- 3.6 The hearing will review information provided by the judging team through the judging team manager, which is collected independently of the judging member of the panel. If possible, the regional fair Chief Judge and/or regional fair committee Chair will be contacted to provide information and context.
- 3.7 The finalist and their CWSF delegate shall be invited to attend the hearing in person or by electronic means. A parent/guardian may attend the hearing. The finalist, delegate and parent/guardian may provide their account of the matter and will have an opportunity to respond to any and all information provided about the potential infraction. Once the hearing is scheduled, failure of the finalist, delegate or parent/guardian to appear will not cause the hearing to be cancelled.
- 3.8 A detailed record of the panel hearing will be kept until after the matter is resolved. If the finding is that there was no academic misconduct then this record will be destroyed.
- 3.9 After the Executive Director receives the finding of the panel, the final decision will be communicated to the finalist, delegate, parent/guardian and National Judge-in-Chief within 24 hours. Using the principles of natural justice, appeals will only be considered based upon Section 5 in the YSC Appeals Policy. If an appeal is granted, the Appeals policy shall be followed.

4 Canada-Wide Science Fair (CWSF) Sanctions

- 4.1 Sanctions for a finding of academic misconduct are based on the perceived severity of the infraction and may include:
 - a) Attendance at CWSF, but withdrawal of eligibility for awards;
 - b) Loss of any CWSF awards;
 - c) Disqualification from the CWSF;
 - d) Suspension from all Youth Science Canada activities for a designated period of time;
 - e) Publication of the decision;
 - f) Suspension from the CWSF and immediate transport home at the parent's/guardian's expense;

g) Other sanctions as may be considered appropriate for the offence.

5 References

1. <https://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/current/academic-advising-and-support/student-academic-integrity/academic-misconduct> (accessed 2022/12/19)