



## Policies and Procedures for Administering Complaints

### *By-Law #10*

“A membership in the RSC is terminated when: (a) the member dies; (b) the member resigns by delivering a written resignation to the President of the Council in which case such resignation shall be effective on the date specified in the resignation; (c) in the case of College members, when their term expires. The Council of the Society may terminate or refuse to proceed with the nomination for membership of a Fellow or Member of the College if: a) The Fellow or Member has been convicted of a serious crime; b) The Fellow or Member has been found by an official body to have engaged in serious misconduct, such as, but not limited to, deliberate plagiarism or falsification of data, harassment, or sexual misconduct. (The Society shall not normally become involved in the investigation of such offences.)

In the event that the Council determines that a member should be expelled or suspended from membership in the RSC, the President, or such other officer as may be designated by the Council, shall provide reasons for the proposed suspension or expulsion while providing the member twenty (20) days’ the opportunity to respond in writing to the President, or such other officer as may be designated by the Council. In the event that no written submissions are received within the designated time frame then the President, or such other officer as may be designated by the Council, will notify the member that they are suspended or expelled from membership in the RSC. If written submissions are received in accordance with this section, the Council will consider such submissions when arriving at their final decision and notify the member of the final decision within twenty (20) days of receipt of the member’s submissions. The Council’s decision shall be final and binding on the member, without any further right of appeal.”

### *Definitions*

**Committee:** The Governance and Ethics Committee of the RSC, a committee of Council consisting of elected officials from the three RSC Academies and the RSC College, and chaired by a designate of Council; or, if necessary, a delegated body (in cases where, for example, a member of the Governance and Ethics Committee, or someone whose term has recently expired, is investigated). Members of the Committee are expected to recuse themselves in instances where they may personally be involved.

**Council:** The Council of the RSC, the senior-most policymaking body of the organization.

**Discrimination:** may relate to comments/actions relating to a person’s gender, gender identity and expression, age, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, race, ethnicity or religion.

**Employer:** Past or present employer of an RSC Member.

**Professional Misconduct** could relate to issues such as (i) the violation of research ethics, or (ii) the falsification of data, such as manipulating research materials, equipment, or processes or changing or omitting data or results such that the research is not accurately represented in the research record.

**Harassment** includes offensive verbal comments, whether verbal, written or on social media, including but not limited to the use of sexual images in public spaces, deliberate intimidation, stalking, photographing or recording individuals without permission, sustained disruption of events, inappropriate physical contact or unwelcome sexual attention.

**Member:** RSC Fellows and Members of the RSC College.

**Official body:** Examples include an academic institution, government agency or a professional society / association.

**Plagiarism:** The act of presenting someone else's work or ideas as your own, with or without their consent, by incorporating it into your work without full acknowledgement. All published and unpublished material, whether in manuscript, printed or electronic form, is covered under this definition. Plagiarism may be intentional or reckless, or unintentional.

**Serious crime:** These are indictable or hybrid offences rather than summary offences, as commonly defined in Canadian provincial criminal codes.

**Sexual misconduct:** Sexual misconduct is a broad term encompassing any unwelcome behavior of a sexual nature that is committed without consent or by force, intimidation, coercion, or manipulation. Sexual misconduct can be committed by a person of any gender, and it can occur between people of the same or different gender.

#### *Policies and Procedures for administering a complaint*

1. Any request for disciplinary action against a Member, including allegations of misconduct as defined in By-Law 10, must be submitted in writing to the chair of the Governance and Ethics Committee at [attention@rsc-src.ca](mailto:attention@rsc-src.ca), with the understanding that all documents received will be treated confidentially. Acknowledgement of receipt of a complaint will be provided within seven (7) days.
2. Members of the Committee, including the Chair, are expected to recuse themselves in instances where there are real or perceived conflicts of interest.
3. The request for action must be made within three years after the production of an official report or a public statement relating to the incident(s) in question.
4. Where the issue of conduct involves an RSC Member and By-Law 10, the RSC will rely on evidence provided by an official investigation of the incident(s). Where an official investigation is ongoing, the RSC will not take a decision. The submission must include
  - (i) Name of the complainant;
  - (ii) Name of the respondent;
  - (iii) Nature of the conduct from which the complaint arises including as much description as possible regarding dates, times, locations and specific actions;
  - (iv) If appropriate, names of individuals who may have witnessed the conduct.
5. Where the issue of conduct involves a Member acting *in their capacity* as a Member of the RSC (whether in attendance at an event, at an RSC meeting, or representing the RSC domestically or internationally) and the Whistleblower Policy, the RSC will make a determination as to whether there is sufficient *prima facie* evidence to conduct an independent investigation. The submission must include
  - (i) Name of the complainant;
  - (ii) Name of the respondent;
  - (iii) Nature of the conduct from which the complaint arises including as much description as possible regarding dates, times, locations and specific actions;
  - (iv) If appropriate, names of individuals who may have witnessed the conduct.Additional documentation may also be provided. If sufficient evidence is not provided, then the case will not proceed.
6. A preliminary internal evaluation of the dossier will be undertaken by the Governance and Ethics committee, who can request clarification or addition information from the individual(s) lodging the complaint. A decision to proceed or close the file will be made within thirty (30) days of receiving the original complaint. Insufficient proper documentation will necessarily lead to a decision to close the file.
7. If the decision is to proceed then the Governance and Ethics Committee will inform the Member of the complaint and provide them with a copy all supporting documents submitted (while maintaining the confidentiality of those submitting the complaint). The Member will then have 20 days to provide a written response addressing the accusations, should they choose to do so. There is no right to an oral hearing, counsel, or an appeal.



8. Once the Member has responded, the Governance and Ethics committee will consider all of the information at hand and make recommendations for action by Council, which can vary from a reprimand to termination of membership.
9. The Council's decision shall be final and binding on the member, without any further right of appeal.
10. Upon any termination of membership, the rights of the member, including any rights in the property of the RSC, automatically cease to exist. Members who resign shall remain liable for any dues owing to the Society at the time of withdrawal and shall forfeit all privileges associated with Fellowship or Membership, including the use of a postnomial.

