

Examination Integrity and Compromise

1 Purpose

This policy details Skilled Trades Ontario's (STO's) authority to ensure the integrity of certifying examinations, including identifying and reporting examination incidents and misconducts, and maintaining fair and transparent processes for investigating exam compromise, in accordance with the [Building Opportunities in the Skilled Trades Act, 2021](#) (BOSTA).

2 Requirements

2.1 Examination Incidents and Misconducts

An examination incident is a one-time, non-deliberate deviation from established examination protocols that may disrupt the standard examination flow or violate examination rules listed in [Schedule A](#).

An examination misconduct is any deliberate action or violation of protocols intended to gain an unfair advantage by compromising or undermining the integrity of the examination process listed in [Schedule B](#). Examination misconducts can be a one-time or repeated occurrence and carry a more severe penalty compared to examination incidents.

STO reserves the right to apply one or more of the following penalties based on the nature and severity of the confirmed infraction following invigilator intervention:

- written warning to the examination candidate
- examination fee forfeiture
- the examination is not graded or is invalidated
- a suspension from reattempting the examination for a specified duration, as determined by STO
- a fine of up to \$10,000, in accordance with [subsection 37](#) of BOSTA
- a limitation to request Provisional Certificate of Qualification (PCofQ) extensions, and/or
- legal action in cases where fraud, impersonation or large-scale security breaches occur
- public notation of misconduct on relevant certification records, including on the public register, if applicable, or
- any other sanction(s) determined to be appropriate by STO.

Examination candidates are not permitted to reattempt the exam during an ongoing administrative review relating to an alleged incident or misconduct regardless of whether the standard 30-day reattempt period has elapsed. A final decision resulting from an integrity-related evaluation is required to determine the appropriate course of action.

If an examination misconduct is discovered after the examination has been graded and the candidate has passed the exam, STO will determine the appropriate course of action, which may include, but is not limited to:

- invalidating the exam result
- revoking the candidate's CofQ, in accordance with [section 12\(b\)](#) of BOSTA, or
- any sanction(s) determined to be appropriate by STO.

STO will notify the examination candidate in writing about the date on or after which the candidate may be eligible to reattempt the examination, subject to the imposed sanction(s), and any corrective action that must be completed within a designated timeframe by the examination candidate, if applicable.

2.2 Appeal of Integrity-Related Decisions

Examination candidates may appeal an integrity-related decision resulting from an administrative review where sanctions have been imposed by STO if one or more of the following occur:

- the candidate provides credible evidence that could reasonably affect the outcome of the decision
- the candidate provides credible evidence of a procedural error that occurred during the examination that may have initiated or contributed to the misconduct, or
- there is documented evidence of administrative errors that may have impacted the administrative review or the issuance of the sanction(s).

Examination candidates must submit their appeal in writing within 30 calendar days of receiving the official notice related to the examination incident or misconduct. If no appeal is requested, STO may proceed with the proposed action.

2.3 Escalation Protocol

In cases where the facts suggest possible offence-related conduct, sponsor misconduct, organized fraud, or any other conduct that may require compliance and enforcement action outside of STO's internal administrative processes, the case may be escalated for investigation.

Schedule A: Types of Examination Incidents

Type of examination incident	Examples, including, but not limited to
Disruptions to standard examination flow before, during or after examination	- Unauthorized eating or drinking during the exam - Use of unauthorized devices and belongings unrelated to examination integrity and compromise - Unintentional damage to exam materials and devices, including writing in the examination booklet, the spillage of liquids, or tearing of pages
Any other event determined to be an examination incident by STO	

Schedule B: Types of Examination Misconducts

Type of examination misconduct	Examples, including, but not limited to
Possession or use of unauthorized devices during exam session	- Use of unauthorized digital applications - Possession or use of unauthorized/prohibited devices - Possession or use of unauthorized paper, notes, or calculations other than the provided exam materials - Using an unauthorized cheat sheet during the exam - Attempting to capture or distribute the exam content via any recording device or application, or by any other means - Leaving the exam room in possession of unauthorized materials
Disruptive behaviours	- Ignoring or refusing to follow instructions from invigilators - Purposefully creating disturbances that affect the integrity of the examination environment - Failure to comply with seating arrangements by changing assigned seating and not adhering to exam protocols - Engaging, or attempting to engage, in lewd acts during the examination - Stealing or damaging other examination candidate's exam materials
Cheating involving other examination candidates, persons and/or staff	- Impersonation by having another person attempt the exam on behalf of the examination candidate - Trying to copy other candidates' responses - Providing or soliciting answers from other examination candidates in a verbal or non-verbal capacity - Attempting to bribe or influence support staff or invigilators by offering financial incentives, favours, promises or any other proposed agreement - Repeatedly asking staff for help in an attempt to receive unauthorized support
General examination misconducts	- Tampering with exam materials by altering, removing, or attempting to change any part of the exam materials before or after submission - Failure to stop on time, such as continuing to write or select responses after the designated exam time has elapsed - Misuse of pre-approved exam accommodation support in order to gain an unfair advantage during the exam
Any other event determined to be an examination misconduct by STO	