



FAIRNESS CHECKLIST for Decision-Makers

This Checklist is offered as a guideline for decision-makers or heads of unit to assess the fairness of policies, processes and practices.

Anyone whose rights, interests, or privileges might be impacted by a decision is entitled to be fairly treated. While not every decision requires the same level of fairness, it is a general rule that the more serious the potential impact on an individual, the higher the standard of fairness required.

This Checklist is based on the Administrative Law principle of Procedural Fairness. It also reflects UBC's strategic commitments, including equity, diversity, inclusivity, accessibility, transparency, and wellness.

RIGHT TO BE HEARD

- Do we give students reasonable and adequate notice that a decision is going to be made that could impact their rights, interests, or privileges?
- Do we provide students with information about the policy or rules, the decision-making criteria, and the process that will be followed?
- Do we provide students with adequate information about the case against them, before asking them to respond?
- Are students provided information about resources and supports to help them through our process?
- Do we provide training on Procedural Fairness to those who have decision-making authority?

RIGHT TO AN UNBIASED PROCESS AND DECISION

- Are there sufficient protocols to assess conflicts of interest?
- Do we have procedures in place to safeguard against actual or perceived influence on the decision-maker?
- If you have had previous involvement in a particular case, will you recuse yourself from subsequent decisions?
- Do we ensure that our actions, words, as well as what we don't do or say, demonstrate not only actual but a perception of impartiality?
- Are we clear about the criteria we use to make a decision to ensure that irrelevant facts are not included in our assessment?
- Do we provide training on the Rule Against Bias and what impartial decision-making requires?
- When deciding the appropriate outcome for a case, are we clear that outcomes should be proportionate and equitable to the particular circumstances of that one case?

RIGHT TO REASONS

- Have we established a practice to provide reasons for our decisions?
- Do our reasons demonstrate that the student's side of the story was considered and weighed, articulate the criteria applied, and show a line of reasoning leading to the decision?
- Is the student provided with information about appeal timelines and procedures?
- Is the student provided with resources and supports to understand the decision and explore options?
- Do we provide training, templates, and guidelines to support the writing of good reasons?

TIMELINESS

- Do we explicitly articulate the timelines we need to meet in the processes leading to decisions?
- Have we established protocols to ensure that inquiries and other communications from students are responded to without delay?
- Are there practices in place so that a student is kept reasonably apprised about the status of their case?
- What mechanisms are in place to ensure that a case proceeds in a timely manner, in anticipation of workload, absences, etc.?
- Have we considered how our timelines might impact other deadlines the student must meet (e.g. graduation, course registration, etc.)?

EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

- Do we demonstrate that our decisions are fair and equitable by taking into account the individual circumstances of each student's case?
- Do our policies, procedures, practices, and interactions embed an appreciation for diversity and cultural difference?
- Do we have the training, access to supports, and the competencies to embed UBC's commitments to EDI into our policies, procedures, and decisions?
- Have we articulated our goals to diversify our team/portfolio to reflect the student population?

TRAUMA-INFORMED

- Are our policies and procedures trauma-informed?
- Do we interact and communicate with students through a trauma-informed lens?
- Have we completed training on what a trauma-informed approach is and how we can continually assess and improve our processes and practices in this regard?

ACCESSIBILITY

- Are our policies, procedures, and other communications clearly and simply worded for the diverse population of students at UBC?
- Is our website easy to navigate and are appropriate individuals in the process easy to identify and contact?
- Are we accessible by offering different ways of communicating with us – by email, phone, in-person, or virtually?
- Do we consider students' lived experience, capacities, and identities and provide flexibility in the ways in which they are able to interact with us?

