



PROCEDURES FOR ACAD 17:

Academic Freedom Procedures Guide

Effective Date: Friday, April 17, 2026

1.0 PURPOSE

This guide provides clear, step-by-step procedures to:

- Support the responsible exercise of academic freedom
- Ensure alignment with Indigenous data sovereignty (OCAP® / CARE)
- Uphold Anishinaabe aadziwin and relational accountability
- Provide transparent processes for review, decision-making, and conflict resolution

2.0 FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLE

At SKG, academic freedom is exercised through the question:

“Does this work uphold truth, responsibility, and respect for community and knowledge?”

3.0 PROCEDURES FOR EXERCISING ACADEMIC FREEDOM

3.1 Teaching and Curriculum Design

Step 1: Curriculum Development

- Align course content with:
 - Program learning outcomes
 - SKG values and Seven Strategic Pathways
- Integrate Indigenous and/or land-based knowledge where appropriate

Step 2: Content Review (if applicable)

- If using:
 - Cultural teachings
 - Language materials
 - Community knowledge
- Consult:

- Elders/Knowledge Keepers
- Program Advisory Committee (if relevant)

Step 3: Classroom Delivery

- Facilitate respectful dialogue
- Encourage critical inquiry
- Ensure cultural safety

Step 4: Addressing Sensitive Topics

- Provide context and grounding
- Use trauma-informed and culturally responsive approaches

3.2 Research and Scholarly Activity

Step 1: Determine Scope of Research

- Does the work involve:
 - Indigenous communities?
 - Cultural knowledge?
 - Community data?

If YES → proceed to Step 2

Step 2: Apply Data Sovereignty Requirements

- Confirm alignment with:
 - OCAP® principles
 - Community protocols
- Identify:
 - Ownership of data
 - Permissions required

Step 3: Engage Community

- Obtain:
 - Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC)
- Establish:
 - Roles and expectations
 - Data sharing agreements

Step 4: Ethics Review

- Submit to:
 - SKG Research Ethics / Knowledge Governance Body
- Include:
 - Community engagement plan
 - Cultural protocol considerations

Step 5: Conduct Research

- Maintain:
 - Relational accountability
 - Ongoing communication with community

Step 6: Dissemination

- Confirm:
 - Community approval (where required)
- Ensure:
 - Accurate representation
 - Proper acknowledgment

4.0 DECISION-MAKING FRAMEWORK (ACADEMIC FREEDOM + DATA SOVEREIGNTY)

When uncertainty arises, apply this **four-part test**:

1. Academic Integrity

- Is the work grounded in credible, ethical scholarship?

2. Community Impact

- Could this harm or misrepresent a community?

3. Knowledge Classification

- Is the knowledge:
 - Public

- Shared with permission
- Restricted/sacred

4. Consent and Authority

- Has appropriate consent been obtained?

If concerns remain → escalate to review process (Section 5)

5.0 REVIEW AND APPROVAL PROCESSES

5.1 When Review is Required

Review is required when:

- Use of Indigenous or community knowledge is unclear
- There is potential conflict between academic freedom and community rights
- A concern or complaint has been raised

5.2 Review Process

Step 1: Initial Assessment

- Conducted by:
 - Program Coordinator / Academic Lead

Step 2: Referral (if needed)

- Escalate to:
 - Academic Council
 - Research Ethics / Knowledge Governance Body

Step 3: Cultural Guidance

- Engage:
 - Elders / Knowledge Keepers

Step 4: Decision

- Based on:
 - Academic freedom principles
 - Data sovereignty requirements
 - Community impact

Step 5: Communication

- Provide written decision with rationale

6.0 CONFLICT RESOLUTION PROCEDURES

6.1 Types of Conflicts

- Academic freedom vs. cultural protocol
- Research dissemination disputes
- Misuse of Indigenous knowledge
- Classroom-related concerns

6.2 Resolution Process

Step 1: Informal Resolution

- Dialogue between involved parties
- Supported by supervisor or Academic Lead

Step 2: Formal Review

- Submission of written concern
- Review by Academic Council or designate

Step 3: Cultural Mediation

- Inclusion of Elders/Knowledge Keepers
- Use of restorative approaches

Step 4: Decision and Recommendations

- Actions may include:
 - Modification of work
 - Restricted dissemination
 - Educational measures

7.0 PUBLIC EXPRESSION GUIDELINES

When engaging publicly (media, publications, social platforms):

Faculty and staff must:

- Distinguish personal views from institutional positions
- Avoid misrepresentation of Indigenous knowledge

- Respect community agreements

If referencing Indigenous knowledge:

- Confirm permission
- Provide appropriate attribution

8.0 DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS

All academic and research activities should maintain:

- Consent forms (where applicable)
- Data sharing agreements
- Ethics approvals
- Records of community engagement

9.0 ROLES IN PRACTICE

Role	Key Responsibilities
Faculty	Ethical teaching, research, and knowledge use
Students	Respectful engagement and academic integrity
Registrar / Academic Admin	Process support and compliance
Academic Council	Oversight and adjudication
Ethics / Knowledge Governance Body	Research review
Elders / Knowledge Keepers	Cultural guidance

10.0 TRAINING AND CAPACITY BUILDING

SKG will provide:

- Faculty orientation on academic freedom + Indigenous data sovereignty
- OCAP® and CARE training
- Cultural competency and protocol training
- Case-based learning scenarios

11.0 MONITORING AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

- Annual review of cases and trends
- Feedback from community partners
- Updates aligned with:
 - IAESC standards
 - Institutional strategic pathways

12.0 QUICK REFERENCE TOOL (FOR DAILY USE)

Before proceeding with teaching, research, or publication, ask:

- ✓ Does this respect community knowledge?
- ✓ Do I have appropriate consent?
- ✓ Could this cause harm or misrepresentation?
- ✓ Does this align with SKG values and responsibilities?

13.0 RELATED POLICIES

Academic Freedom Policy; Data Sovereignty & Intellectual Property Policy