Inquiry Checklist

Procedure
Receipt of allegation(s)
- collect information
  - nature of allegation
  - possible respondents
  - necessary evidence
- is it a matter covered by misconduct regulations?
- would informal steps be possible or appropriate?
- determine if frivolous or clearly mistaken

Consult with department head (or next in administrative line) of respondent
- if not frivolous or clearly mistaken, inform dean

Dean makes determination about whether inquiry is necessary or desirable
- select inquiry team members
  - note: charge letter should have policy attached, written orientation information for team members, if any, and background on allegations, if available and appropriate

Inform respondent of inquiry
- provide written notice of charge, rights under policy
- secure evidence (if necessary)

Inform complainant of inquiry

Arrange meeting of inquiry team
- orientation of team members
  - requirements of policy
  - dynamics of process
  - their role
  - information on allegations, review of evidence available
- meet with complainant
- meet with respondent
- meet with others, as appropriate
- secure additional information, as needed & appropriate
  - (meet with any of witnesses again, as necessary)

Come to conclusions; draft report
- Submit report to required official
  - date of team appointment, compliance with procedural requirements
  - how many meetings, for how long
  - with whom met
  - evidence reviewed
  - findings & conclusions
  - recommendations re investigation

Decision re initiation of investigation / termination of inquiry
- if no investigation recommended:
  - notify respondent
  - notify complainant
  - notify witnesses
  - notify others informed of inquiry
  - collect documents, seal file
- if investigation recommended:
  - notify respondent, solicit comments on report
  - notify initiator
  - notify witnesses
  - notify others informed of inquiry
  - notify agencies

Document
- receipt
- letter
- charge letter
- notice of inquiry
- receipt
- notice of inquiry
- transmittal letter
- inquiry report*
- letter
- letter
- letter
- letter
- letter
- letter
- letter

* SEE SAMPLE IN
Begin Inquiry -- Dean Notification

CONFIDENTIAL  
(Date)

(Address)

Dear Dean Evans,

I am writing in my capacity of Research Standards Officer to provide you with information about our academic inquiry procedures and the background of the situation in which it has been alleged that Professors Allen and Burns appropriated the work of Mr. Cole. For your information, I have attached copies of all the materials in my possession on this matter.

As I understand the situation, Mr. Cole alleges that Professor Allen appropriated without acknowledgment work contained in a research proposal Mr. Cole submitted to him last September. Mr. Cole contends that Professor Allen is using this material in a proposal he is preparing to submit to the National Science Foundation. Mr. Cole also claims that Professor Burns appropriated and presented as his own, while on sabbatical, work Mr. Cole had submitted to him in a paper. Mr. Cole further alleges that Professor Burns did not sufficiently cite or attribute Mr. Cole’s contribution to the written materials used in a short course presented to industrial affiliates of Professor Burns’ program two years ago.

Under our policy, the University Policy and Procedures on Academic Integrity in Research and Publication, an inquiry is designed to “determine whether there is sufficient credible evidence of academic misconduct to warrant a full-scale investigation.” It is intended to be relatively informal, and to occur quickly. For your information, I have enclosed a copy of the policy. The inquiry process is described starting on page 6.

Under the policy, after the dean makes a determination as to whether an inquiry is warranted, he or she appoints two members to an Inquiry Team, one from the department in which the person whose conduct is in question holds his or her primary appointment, and the other from elsewhere in the university. The policy provides that the Team “shall consist of individuals who have no conflicts of interest in the case, are unbiased, and have appropriate qualifications to judge the issues raised.”

Following appointment of the Inquiry Team, I will take two immediate actions: 1) notify Professors Allen and Burns in writing of the allegations, the membership of the Inquiry Team and their rights under the policy, and 2) convene a meeting of the Team. I will work with the Team through the process, including the production of their final report to you. At minimum, that report must include the findings of the Team and a recommendation as to “whether there is sufficient credible evidence of academic misconduct to warrant a full-scale Investigation.” The final determination as to whether to accept the recommendation of the Inquiry Team is made by the Vice Chancellor for Research after consultation with you and other appropriate involved parties.

I hope this provides the information you need at this point. If I can be of any further assistance, please let me know.

Sincerely,

Eva Davis  
Research Standards Officer