

National College of Ireland

Academic Integrity Policy (revised April 2023)

Introduction

The purpose of NCI's Academic Policy is to set out the arrangements and supports for enabling students to understand and value academic integrity. To provide a framework for effective, fair, consistent, and timely processes in the event of an allegation of academic misconduct against a student¹ at the College.

This policy and any associated procedures apply to all work submitted for assessment by all students to NCI, on all taught and research programmes, in all delivery modes.

Academic Integrity Statement/Definition

The National College of Ireland, as an educational organization, espouses the highest standards of professionalism among its students both at undergraduate and postgraduate level; the showing of respect for the work of others and acting with honesty and personal responsibility in the preparation and submission of coursework and completing examinations is an essential component of academic professionalism and underpins all academic activities.

Academic Integrity is the commitment to and the demonstration of honest and ethical behaviour in academic standards.

Academic Integrity has been defined as "*Compliance with ethical and professional principles, standards and practices and consistent system of values, that serves as guidance for making decisions and taking actions in education, research and scholarship*".²

The International Centre for Academic Integrity identifies the six fundamental values as honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility, and courage³.

Responsibility for demonstrating your engagement with the learning process honestly and completing your own work. "Compliance with ethical and professional principles, standards and practices by individuals or institutions in education, research and scholarship".⁴

Academic Integrity is relevant to all areas of academic work undertaken by the enrolled learner. This covers and is not limited to all activities related to the achievement of academic credit for awards and all qualifications; all methods of learning, including the classroom, online, distance, work-based learning and research.

¹ Refers to all students of the College on every level

² The National Academic Integrity Network, (2021). Academic Integrity Guidelines, Quality & Qualifications Ireland, p.10, <https://www.qqi.ie/sites/default/files/2021-11/academic-integrity-guidelines.pdf> accessed 20/9/2022

³ International Centre for Academic Integrity (2021). The Fundamental Values of Academic Integrity (3rd edition). Available at https://academicintegrity.org/images/pdfs/20019_ICAI-Fundamental-Values_R12.pdf Accessed 20/9/22

⁴ European Network for Academic Integrity (ENAI), (2018), Glossary for Academic Integrity. P 7-8 available at https://www.academicintegrity.eu/wp/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/GLOSSARY_final.pdf accessed on 20/9/22

Academic Misconduct/Dishonesty

Any behaviour or action which flouts academic integrity and breaches the fundamental values of honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility, and courage is considered to constitute Academic Misconduct. Examples include but are not limited to plagiarism, cheating (in any form or form), misrepresentation of research (e.g. data falsification and fabrication of data), contract cheating, copy-editing, purchase of examination material(s), breaches of the examination and assessment regulations, impersonation, and any other act which dishonestly uses information to gain academic credit.

Academic Misconduct Definition

“Any action or attempted action that undermines academic integrity and may result in an unfair academic advantage or disadvantage for any member of the academic community or wider society.”⁵

Academic Dishonesty Definition

“Morally culpable behaviours perpetrated by individuals or institutions that transgress ethical standards held in common between other individuals and/or groups in institutions of education, research, or scholarship”⁶

Plagiarism

The act of taking another person’s words, ideas, data or images and using them as your own without giving credit to the original source of the information.

Examples of plagiarism

The following are a few examples of plagiarism:

- Copying words or ideas from someone else without giving them credit
- Copying illustrations, graphs or computer code (for code, check permitted use with your lecturers)
- Paraphrasing another's work too closely, with only minor changes, but with the essential meaning, format and/or progression of ideas maintained
- Failing to put a quotation in quotation marks – this is considered plagiarism even if you reference the source because you have presented the work as a paraphrase
- Relying on a specific idea or interpretation which is not one's own, and which has not been properly cited
- Piecing together the work of others from multiple sources, and representing them as original work
- Presenting as independent work done in collaboration with others (i.e., collusion)
- Preparing an original and correctly referenced assignment and submitting part or all of the assignment twice for separate subjects/courses

⁵ European Network for Academic Integrity (ENAI), (2018), Glossary for Academic Integrity. P 8 available at https://www.academicintegrity.eu/wp/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/GLOSSARY_final.pdf accessed on 20/9/22

⁶ European Network for Academic Integrity (ENAI), (2018), Glossary for Academic Integrity. P 7 available at https://www.academicintegrity.eu/wp/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/GLOSSARY_final.pdf accessed on 20/9/22

See Page 11 of the **NCI Library Referencing Guide, 5th edition** for more examples of where and how plagiarism occurs.

In the National College of Ireland. Plagiarism is an act of serious **academic misconduct**, and the penalties are severe if a student is found to have deliberately plagiarised the work of another, including copying the work of other students.

The college uses a plagiarism software package called **Turnitin** to help academic members of staff to detect these instances of plagiarism. If a lecturer has serious concerns about plagiarism, they will notify you and then seek a second opinion. If concerns are found to be justified, the consequences can range from the following:

1. Your written work grade being capped
2. Loss of mark in part or whole
3. Submitting a new piece of work
4. Suspension
5. Expulsion

See our [Academic Integrity Guide](#) for more details.

Falsification/Manipulation

Academic Honesty means the use of your own thoughts and words in your written work, taking of exams, and other course related activities. Academic writing is built on trust and students are expected to be honest. When information has been taken from another source, you are expected to give full credit for the use of another person's thoughts and ideas. Intentional or unintentional use of another's thoughts and ideas, without acknowledging the source constitutes plagiarism. As a student, it is your responsibility to avoid plagiarism.

In short presenting or making use of fictitious, altered, or misrepresented data, evidence, citations or experimental results. It also covers documents such as exceptional circumstances evidence, or any other information that could be used to gain academic advantage.

Contract Cheating

Engaging with a third party to complete educational assignment, examination, or research in any form as if it were your own work. These site(s) are also known as 'Essay Mills'.

Academic Integrity & Student Responsibilities

The purpose of assessment, both formative and summative, is to support learning, ascertain learner understanding and demonstrate the achievement of specific learning outcomes by that learner. It is the responsibility of the enrolled learner to ensure all submitted work for assessment purposes in an academic setting, which includes but is not limited to text, graphics, tables, formulae, results or any representation of ideas in print, electronic or any other media, in addition to artefacts, computer software and algorithms, correctly acknowledges the source of any data which is not the original work of the learner.⁷

⁷ The National Academic Integrity Network (2020). Academic Integrity – National Principles & Lexicon for Academic Integrity. Quality & Qualifications Ireland. P2-3 available at <https://www.qqi.ie/sites/default/files/2021-11/academic-integrity-national-principles-and-lexicon-of-common-terms.pdf> accessed on 20/9/22

All students must be willing and must sign a declaration that the work they are submitting is their own; that there is no unacknowledged use of another person's work; and that the work has not been previously submitted by the student or by anyone else.

Students must and should not mislead examiner by submitting work that suggests that the information gathered and analysed was their own when this was not the case.

Legislation exists in Ireland and students need to be aware that they could be prosecuted for breaches of academic integrity, specifically the provision or advertising of cheating services. [Section 43A of the Qualifications and Quality Assurance \(Education and Training\) \(Amendment\) Act, 2019](#) as amended specifically empowers the Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) Agency to prosecute those who facilitate academic cheating. The provisions cover: impersonation; provision of or advertising of cheating services and the publishing of advertisement for cheating. QQI is responsible for bringing prosecutions in respect of these offences.

Provision of the required support(s), encouragement and learning opportunities is essential if the integrity, reputation and culture of academic honesty within the National College of Ireland (NCI) is to be maintained and students are to commit to and pursue their studies in accordance with the principles that underpin academic integrity. The following supports are also available to all students.

[NCI Examination & Assessment Regulations & Information](#)

[Library Help Centre's support service](#) & [Guides/Tutorials with Referencing aids](#).

[Library's Turnitin and support guides](#)

[\(4.13\) Code of Practice for Academic Honesty & Integrity](#)

[Suggested Revised Plagiarism & Academic Integrity \(misconduct\) policy/procedures review](#)

[Study Skills for Academic Writing](#)

Marks & Standards for the programme they are completing (as appropriate) Information on programmes by individual School's to be submitted?

If students are in doubt as to what constitutes academic integrity, they are encouraged to seek advice and guidance from Academic Staff or from the Library Staff/Library Help Centre.

It is important to note that not all suspected incidences of academic misconduct are intentional, NCI acknowledges that students are learners of varying abilities and skills of appropriate scholarly research and attribution takes time to learn. We further note that some students come from different educational cultures with varying perceptions and accepted styles of referencing and acknowledging original work. These students may require time to learn what is required to demonstrate academic integrity as it applies to higher education in the NCI and Ireland.

Students may at the beginning of their studies unintentionally fail to meet the required standards of academic integrity. Where students in the early stages of their programme of studies or research are not learning as expected they will be supported in addressing their shortcomings with regard to demonstrating academic integrity.

Suspected Incidents of Academic Misconduct

Any behaviour or action which contravenes academic integrity and breaches its fundamental values honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility, and courage is considered to constitute Academic Misconduct.

NCI reserves the right to avail of any technological or other means available to it to detect the suspected occurrence of plagiarism or any other act of academic misconduct in respect of any assessment or other academic activity undertaken by any of its students.

When a suspected incidence of academic misconduct occurs during an examination setting, it will be addressed in accordance with the College's Examinations & Assessment Regulations.

Where a suspected incidence of academic misconduct by any student other than in an examination will be investigated in accordance with the provisions of this policy.

Where a suspected incidence of academic misconduct comes to the attention of any member of the College's staff, they are required to bring that to the attention of the relevant authority such as the Programme, Course Director, Lecturer or equivalent in the School which the student is enrolled. Following an assessment of the suspected breach by the appropriate subject matter expert(s), the relevant School or Unit will classify the response, (Level 1; Level 2 or Level 3) for the suspected breach in accordance with the criteria provided for (see Table 1 below)

The classification of a response identified on a case-by-case basis will determine the further course of action to be pursued in respect of the suspected breach as identified. The determination of the relevant response level will be made under the supervision of the relevant Programme or Course Director or equivalent in consultation with the Head of School as appropriate.

Response to Academic Misconduct (outcomes & consequence)

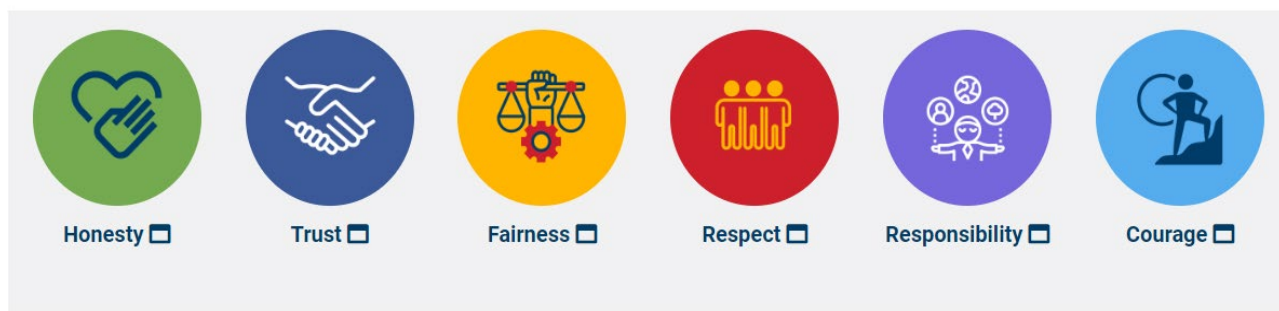
Programmes up to and including Level 8

Academic Misconduct	1st Offence	Subsequent Offence	Other Considerations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plagiarism <p>Level one - characterised by poor scholarship and a careless approach to referencing the work of others.</p> <p>Level two – deemed to be a case of plagiarism where the student presents the work of others as if it were their own work.</p> <p>Level three – deemed to be a case of plagiarism where the student has plagiarised to a serious and major extent in the work submitted.</p>	<p>Warning & academic essay and resubmit (1st sitting)</p> <p>Assessment to be resubmitted 2nd sitting</p> <p>Suspension 1 year</p>	<p>Failure of assignment</p> <p>Suspension</p> <p>Expulsion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Academic Level Stage Other personal circumstances which may affect the student's progression

Academic Misconduct	1st Offence	Subsequent Offence	Other Considerations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Outsourcing' 	Suspension 1 year	Expulsion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic Level • Stage • Other personal circumstances which may affect the student's progression
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unauthorised Collaboration 	Failure of assessment and resubmit, 2nd sitting	Suspension	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic Level • Stage • Other personal circumstances which may affect the student's progression
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cheating in Examinations – Distributing unauthorised material 	Suspension 1 year	Expulsion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic Level • Stage • Other personal circumstances which may affect the student's progression
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cheating in Examinations – Being in possession of unauthorised material in an examination. 	Suspension 1 year	Expulsion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic Level • Stage • Other personal circumstances which may affect the student's progression
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fabrication 	Expulsion		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic Level • Stage • Other personal circumstances which may affect the student's progression
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impersonation 	Expulsion		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic Level • Stage • Other personal circumstances which may affect the student's progression
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aiding & Abetting 	Suspension 1 year	Expulsion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic Level • Stage • Other personal circumstances which may affect the student's progression

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fabrication 	Expulsion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic Level • Stage • Other personal circumstances which may affect the student's progression
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impersonation 	Expulsion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic Level • Stage • Other personal circumstances which may affect the student's progression
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aiding & Abetting 	Expulsion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic Level • Stage • Other personal circumstances which may affect the student's progression

Academic Integrity Values



Honesty: [Honesty is about telling the truth]

It is important that you are honest with yourself as well as others. Sometimes this involves **self-reflection and recognition**. If you are struggling with your workload or you don't understand how to complete a particular assignment, be honest about this and seek assistance from the relevant people. This might mean making a plan with your lecturer or a professional staff member or coming to the Library Help Centre.

When it comes to your academic work, honesty also means being clear about what you have done yourself and what you have incorporated from others, whether this is quoting another work or adapting it. You do this by **giving credit** to work (i.e. writing, speeches, film, music, art) that you use from others.

Trust:

Being honest builds trust. Being trustworthy means being **reliable**. When you put your trust in someone, or something, you rely on that person, or thing, meeting a certain set of recognised standards and being genuine. An environment of trust is key to successful **collaboration** that helps the development of knowledge.

You should also consider the trustworthiness of materials that you use in your work or the places that you go to for assistance. Use critical thinking when you consider these and do some digging to make sure that they are honest, **reputable**, and **legitimate**. Sometimes when you seek help for your assignments online you will be targeted by services that do not operate honestly and cannot be trusted. They may offer to do your work for you, but not only can you not trust the quality of the work, but these services also operate illegally and therefore sometimes take advantage of students by blackmailing them, asking for continued payments.

The skill of critical thinking also ties in with NCI's Study Skills Module (Academic Writing Skills Guide etc.) in that it helps you develop into a creator, evaluator, and communicator of information, and enables you to become an independent and creative thinker.

Fairness:

Fairness is established through **consistent, equitable, and impartial** treatment of others, and **transparent** guidelines and policies. Students demonstrate fairness by completing their own work and following College policies, and the College demonstrates fairness by ensuring that these policies are clear and are applied consistently and with impartiality.

Respect:

Respect entails **recognition** and **value**, both of your own work and perspective, and those of others. Placing value on your own work means putting effort into it and persevering through obstacles that may arise because you recognise that your contribution is meaningful.

Respecting others means listening to different perspectives, engaging in open communication and civil debates, and acknowledging the contributions of others in our own work. It also means recognising what we might learn from others, and what we might teach them, which incorporates the concept of **meaningful feedback**.

Understanding how to give constructive feedback to others, and how to receive it ourselves is important. This involves considering the impact of our words and actions, and framing these in a way that is useful, not hurtful. When receiving feedback, we treat it respectfully by being open to it and reflecting on it.

Responsibility:

Acting in a responsible manner means that you take **accountability** for your actions. The responsibility for your education is shared between yourself and the College. Therefore, it is important that you meaningfully **engage** in your own learning. This includes making sure you know College policies and programme expectations, not being afraid to **ask questions** if you don't understand something, or if you need help, and **following through** with any tasks you need to complete.

Courage:

Sometimes having academic integrity won't be the easy or popular choice. It takes courage to **stand firm** in your values and **persevere** when something becomes difficult. At times being courageous might mean getting a lower mark on something but doing the work yourself means that you can learn from that and improve, making whatever mark you get from completing your own work more valuable than one you might get by passing someone else's work off as your own.

Equally, being courageous means **speaking up** if you notice something that breaches academic integrity, including if you are approached by an individual or company offering to do your work for you. This helps to maintain the fairness, integrity, and value of your degree.

Additional: Have a look at Quality and Qualification Ireland's (QQI) [#MyOwnWork](#) campaign