
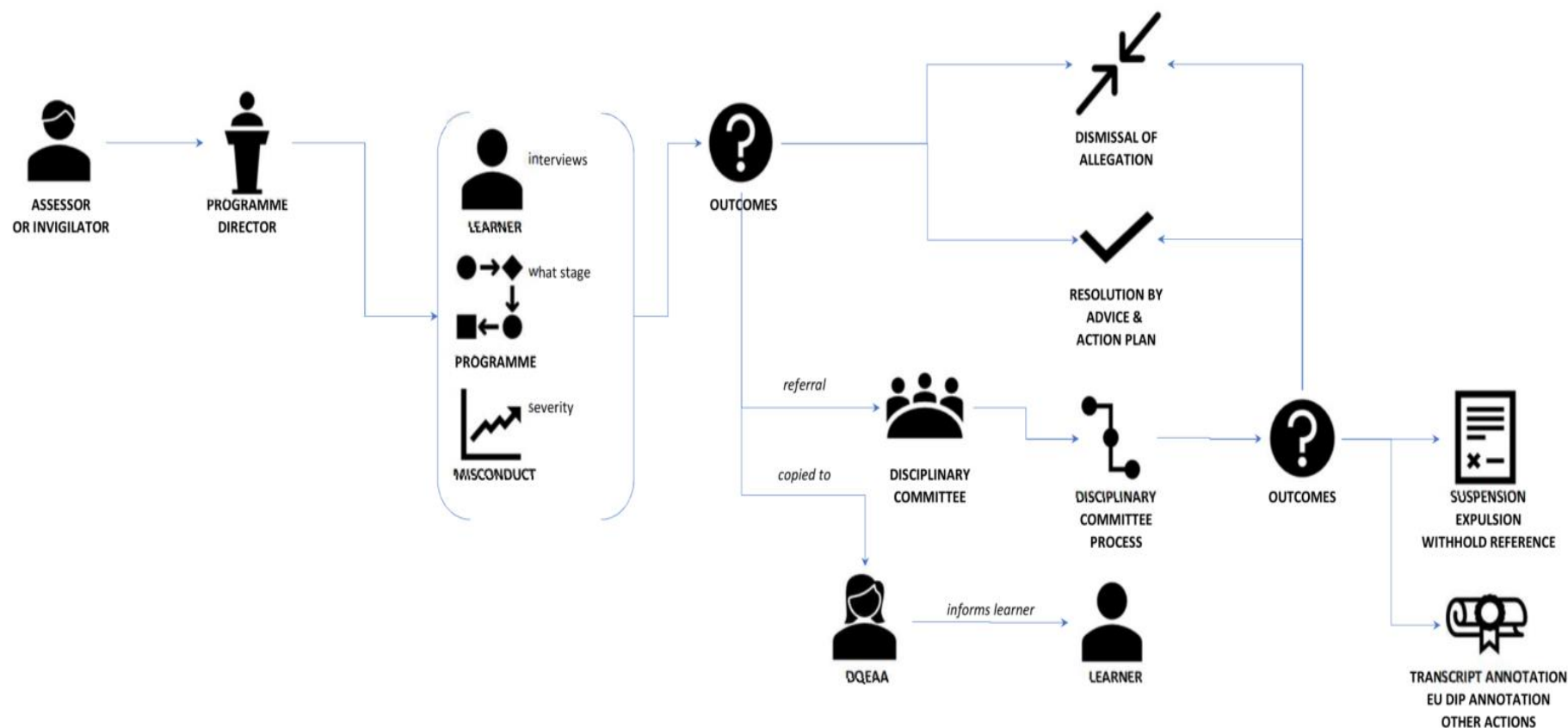


#	POLICY TITLE	POLICY AREA:	VERSION:	DATE ADOPTED :
	<b>7.8 ACADEMIC INTEGRITY</b>	7) SUPPORT FOR LEARNERS	5.0	June 2023



**Introduction:-**

It is commonly accepted that all members of the academic community, academic staff and students, build on the work of others. However, it is also commonly accepted that we build on the work of others in an open and explicit manner, and with due acknowledgement. The upholding of academic integrity in Higher Education is of paramount importance.

The purpose of this document is to:-

- define Academic Integrity;
- identify what constitutes academic misconduct and dishonesty;
- outline procedures, with proportionate consequences, for those found to have breached academic integrity standards.

**Legal, Regulatory and Current Context:-**

This policy is designed with reference to:-

- QQI Core Statutory QA Guidelines;
- Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) (Amendment) Act 2019 (enacted July 2020);
- Green Paper on Assessment (2018);
- The on-going work of the International Centre for Academic Integrity (ICAI)<sup>1</sup>.
- The on-going work of the National Academic Integrity Network (NAIN)<sup>2</sup>.
- On-going research related to evolving generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) software

**Policy Statement: -**

ICAI (referenced above) suggest that academic integrity requires honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility, and courage.

Worldwide the second era of digital technologies, including generative artificial intelligence, brings with it concerns about academic integrity in education. All HEIs have entered a new phase in how they address issues of academic integrity, as generative artificial intelligence software becomes publically available.

SNMCI will meet this paradigm shift in education conscious that there is no 'right' answer and aware that Artificial intelligence is an issue, only if we do not

- adapt;
- seek ways to mitigate any threat posed to the integrity of our awards and processes;
- equip students with the professional skills and standards to use emerging technology in ethical and responsible ways.

SNMCI aspires to an academic community where all (staff and students) are committed to the principles of Academic Integrity and to acting

<sup>1</sup> 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](https://academicintegrity.org/images/pdfs/20019_ICAI-Fundamental-Values_R12.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> 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>

responsibly and ethically in all actions and interactions.

**Therefore: -**

- In line with the College philosophy and values, SNMCI, requires staff to model the highest standards of conduct; recognising and acknowledging the contributions and achievements of others in scholarship, teaching, and research.
- The College will clearly outline its responsibilities with regard to Academic Integrity and also outline student responsibilities as part of a joint effort to maintain academic standards and to avoid unfair academic advantage or disadvantage for any member of the SNMCI academic community.
- The College will maintain an educative approach to incidents of student academic misconduct; encouraging and supporting good academic practice and student success, and endeavouring to equip students with the professional skills and standards to use emerging technology in ethical and responsible ways.

**Scope: -**

- This policy applies to all learners at SNMCI and to any individual acting in an academic capacity on behalf of the College.
- The Quality Enhancement Committee (QEC) is responsible for the review and implementation of this policy on behalf of the Academic Board.
- All academic staff members are responsible for upholding this policy and its accompanying procedures.

**Definitions:**

**Academic Integrity:**

SNMCI has adopted a definition of Academic Integrity, as per the International Centre for Academic Integrity (ICAI), as...

- “a commitment, even in the face of adversity to the fundamental values of honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility and courage”.

SNMCI considers that Academic Integrity

- is something to be achieved through good practice rather than ‘misconduct’ to be avoided;
- goes beyond understanding and avoiding plagiarism, although this is a key part of it;
- involves students demonstrating knowledge and understanding through a process of evaluation and research, expressing understanding and original ideas independently, honestly and in an appropriate academic style, using good referencing and acknowledging all sources;

**Academic Misconduct:**

SNMCI has adopted the European Network for Academic Integrity (ENAI's) definition of Academic Misconduct as ...

"...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."<sup>3</sup>

**Academic Dishonesty:**

SNMCI has adopted the European Network for Academic Integrity (ENAI's) definition of Academic Dishonesty as ...

"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"<sup>4</sup>

**Breaches of Academic Integrity:**

**Plagiarism, whether deliberate or inadvertent, is considered to be academically fraudulent and a serious offence.**

**Plagiarism:** Plagiarism: attempting to pass off others' effort, intellectual property, or any other work as their own by copying without consent or failing to use academic referencing conventions (deliberately or otherwise);

- unclear referencing: taking parts of the work from a source or sources and using them without acknowledgement in a submitted assignment. SNMCI is aware that this type of plagiarism often arises because learners are unsure how and when to reference material;
- inadequate paraphrasing: when a student closely follows a source and partially changes words and phrases;
- copying another's work;
- cutting and pasting from the web – even if it is referenced;
- previously submitted work: submitting a piece of work that has previously been submitted in another module, in another course of study, or for assessment in another college, (self-plagiarism).
- use of artificially generated text (e.g., using ChatGPT or similar) where **it is not allowed** within the assessment guidelines provided for a module.

**Collusion:**

- collusion: aiding, attempting to aid, obtaining aid from or attempting to obtain aid from another learner, or any other person, to contribute to an assessment task except where required for group assessment tasks;
- having another person write all or part of an assignment.

**Fraud:**

- fabrication of data: making up results and recording or reporting them;

<sup>3</sup> 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](https://www.academicintegrity.eu/wp/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/GLOSSARY_final.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> 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](https://www.academicintegrity.eu/wp/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/GLOSSARY_final.pdf)

- falsification of data: manipulating research, materials, equipment, or processes or changing or omitting data or results such that the research is not accurately represented in the research record;
- conducting research without ethical approval.

**Impersonation:**

- impersonation is the assumption of another person's identity with the intention of gaining unfair advantage during examinations or any other form of assessment;
- it also refers to a person who knowingly and willingly allows his or her identity to be assumed with the intention of gaining an unfair advantage for the person impersonated.

**Cheating:**

Cheating is the offence of gaining or seeking to gain an unfair or fraudulent advantage in assessment, where the conduct is of such seriousness as to be regarded as a major infringement of academic good practice.

**Contract Cheating:**

Contract cheating is engaging with a third party to complete an assignment, in any form, and presenting it as your own work. For example, the use of 'Essay Mills'.

**Unauthorised and/or unacknowledged use of text generating software e.g., ChatBots:**

The **(unauthorised)** use of artificially -generated content is a breach of academic integrity and may contribute to an 'undeserved' grade or award. This has the potential to compromise the College's award standards.

**Responsibilities: -**

- **College /Programme/Staff Level:**
- programme development will include consideration of reducing opportunities for academic impropriety and increasing student motivation and development of lifelong ethical practices;
- all programmes will include mandatory modules on academic and professional development;
- all programmes will consider 'forward -thinking' assessment strategies to maintain academic standards and promote authentic learning and assessment in the face of current and future AI applications;
- programme directors will assess patterns of incidents related to academic integrity as part of the annual programme review and will contribute to the College's Policy on Academic Integrity to ensure that the policy and attached procedures remain appropriate and adequate to their task;
- guidelines, checklists, and staff facing resources will be provided to programme staff through induction, CPD, programme committee meetings and in the lecturer handbooks;
- staff will engage in assessment reviews;

- staff will issue clear guidelines related to assessment (as agreed by the Teaching, Learning and Assessment Board) and indicate clearly in all assignment briefs, the College's policy with regard to generative software, e.g., **where and when it is not permitted and/or where it is permitted with prior permission.**
- SNMCI will inform relevant stakeholders if and when it becomes aware of services such as Essay Mills and other Cheating Services, in line with QQI and NAIN 2021 b p 10.<sup>5</sup>
- incidents of infringement of academic integrity policy will be dealt with in fair and transparent ways, to maintain the integrity of academic programmes and to avoid unfair academic advantage or disadvantage for any member of the SNMCI academic community.

#### **Student Level:**

- modules and workshops related to good academic practice will commence at Stage One of all programmes and will be reinforced at subsequent stages to keep pace with evolving issues;
- guidelines, checklists and student facing resources, including a detailed referencing guide will be provided on the College's learning platform, Moodle;
- students should demonstrate initiative and be proactive about investigating good academic practice. They have a responsibility to attend modules on good academic practice and to make themselves aware of the College policy;
- they are responsible for following all guidance related to good practice and academic integrity as given by academic staff;
- students will sign and abide by the Academic Integrity Pledge pertaining to all assignments (in all formats and all modes) stating that the material in question is wholly their own work (or the joint work of the named participants in the case of a group project) except as indicated by referencing or acknowledgement. The pledge also pertains to summative exams (online or in person) which must be completed in a fair, honest and trustworthy manner, adhering to the instructions issued.

#### **Minor, Major and Gross Infringements of academic impropriety**

##### **Minor Infringement:**

- Minor infringements refer to unfair advantage arising from **negligence** rather than deliberate intent.
- There are two instances of minor infringements recognised in this policy, those which occur for the first time and those which occur for the second time in the knowledge of the first infringement.
- A third or further minor academic infringement in the knowledge of the second infringement is deemed to be a major infringement.

##### **Major Infringement:**

- Major infringement refers to flagrant cases of plagiarism and collusion (even those occurring for the first time) and all cases of misrepresentation, fraud, impersonation and cheating.

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<sup>5</sup> Academic Integrity: National Principles and Lexicon of Common Terms (QQI, 2021b)

- There are three instances of major infringement recognised in this policy, those which occur for the first time, those which occur for the second time in the knowledge of the first infringement and those which occur for the third time in the knowledge of the second infringement.

**Gross Infringement:**

- Gross infringement refers to particular instances for which the only penalty is immediate expulsion.

**Current instances of such an infringement are: -**

- Impersonation at a written exam
- Submission of a research dissertation where the work is not the students own.

**Note:** Instances can only be added to or deleted from this Schedule by the Academic Board.

**Principles dealing with instances of Minor, Major and Gross Infringements of academic impropriety: -**

- **Each instance** will be considered in light of (a), the extent of the issue suspected and (b), what stage the student has reached in their programme of study.
- **First instances** of infringement of academic integrity will be viewed as arising from **negligence rather than deliberate intent** and students will be offered extra support and instruction on acceptable academic practice. **Note:** first instances in Award Year may have further consequences.
- **Repeated instances:** Each incidence is counted over the entire duration of a student's programme. A second offence is deemed to be more serious;
- **Major infringements:** repeated breaches of academic integrity and breaches of academic integrity in award year are consider as 'major' offences and will be referred to the Disciplinary Committee;

**Staff Involved:**

Lecturers; Programme Directors; Deputy Programme Directors; Year Heads; Examinations Office; Invigilators; DQAA.

Procedure Outline	Person/s responsible	Records generated to ensure evidence of follow through
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- When an assessor suspects that a student has engaged in academic misconduct the matter is referred to the Programme Director and recorded on <b>FQA 7.8: Lecturer Report re Suspected Breach of Academic Integrity Form</b>.</li> <li>- The Programme Director and lecturer will speak to the learner concerned;</li> <li>- The learner will have the opportunity to offer an explanation, oral or written, of their actions and has the right to be accompanied at any meeting by an advocate of their choice;</li> </ul>	Learner/ Programme Director	FQA 7.8: Lecturer Report Form Piece of assessment Minutes of meeting Turnitin Report if

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Programme Director will discuss with the learner an appropriate course of action in light of (a) whether this is a first instance (b) the extent of the infringement (c) what stage the student has reached in their programme of study.</li> </ul>	<b>PD</b>	<b>available Documented Incident</b>
<b>Action may include:</b>		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Dismissal of the allegation</li> </ol>		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Resolution of the incident internally through:             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Advice on acceptable academic referencing and writing and a resubmission of the assignment without any penalty. Agreed Action plan to work towards specific targets in relation to academic integrity;</li> </ol> </li> </ol>	<b>PD</b>	<b>Agreed plan</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>b) Advice on acceptable academic referencing and writing and a resubmission of the assignment for a reduced maximum mark. Agreed Action plan to work towards specific targets in relation to academic integrity;</li> </ol>	<b>PD</b>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>c) Advice on acceptable academic referencing and writing and a submission of a new written assignment in the same area for a reduced maximum mark. Agreed Action plan to work towards specific targets in relation to academic integrity;</li> </ol>		<b>PD Report</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Referral of the matter for review by The Disciplinary Committee</li> </ol>		
<b>Note:</b> Repeated offences will automatically be referred to The Disciplinary Committee		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Programme Director will document the incident and proposed course of action</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Any incident of alleged plagiarism reported to The Disciplinary Committee should be copied to the Director of Quality and Academic Affairs (DQAA) and include a short statement outlining, (a) grounds for report(b) the piece of work under consideration and (c) any other supporting evidence.</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A student appearing before the Disciplinary Committee retains the right to be accompanied by an advocate of their choice;</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- In all cases of referral to The Disciplinary Committee the student should be informed by the DQAA that their work is under scrutiny by the committee.</li> </ul>		
<p>The right of the student to due process and appeal is at all times fully recognised. The procedure of any disciplinary action will be carried out with dignity and respect for the student and for all concerned.</p>	<b>Disciplinary Committee</b>	<b>Correspondence</b>
	<b>DQAA</b>	<b>Report of Disciplinary Committee Correspondence</b>
	<b>Chair of Disciplinary Committee</b>	
<p>The decision of the Disciplinary Committee will be made known to the student and the Head of</p>		



<p>Examinations and Registrations (as appropriate).</p> <p><b>See QA 7.9:TOR: Disciplinary Committee</b></p> <p>Disciplinary action imposed by the Disciplinary Committee may include:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reduction in the mark (including a mark of 0) for the work affected;</li> <li>- Re-examination of student's written assignments in the current module;</li> <li>- Re-examination of student's written work in current full year/stage;</li> <li>- Requirement to submit a new written assignment in the same subject area, for a reduced maximum mark;</li> <li>- Requirement to complete assignment in a controlled setting e.g., written examination;</li> <li>- Requirement to complete assignment in a different mode e.g., oral presentation.</li> <li>- Requirement to repeat module;</li> <li>- Requirement to repeat full year/stage;</li> <li>- Requirement to leave the College.</li> </ul>		
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#### Policy Control Sheet

<b>Policy</b>	<b>7.8: Academic Integrity</b>
<b>Version</b>	5.0
<b>Adopted/Effective</b>	June 2023
<b>Supersedes</b>	4.0
<b>Monitoring/ Next Review Date</b>	Yearly, or as often as required
<b>Responsible Officer(s) Designated Reviewer(s)</b>	Director of Quality and Academic Affairs (DQAA); PD's
<b>Scope</b>	All Programmes

#### References

<b>SNMCI Policy area</b>	<b>7) Support For Learners</b>
<b>Developed with reference to</b>	<p>Quality and Qualifications Ireland (2016), <i>Core Statutory Quality Assurance (QA) Guidelines</i>, Sections 1.1; 4.3; 5.3.</p> <p>Irish Universities Association (2014), Ensuring Research Integrity in Ireland.</p> <p>The European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity</p> <p>The European Network for Academic Integrity (ENAI)</p> <p>International Centre for Academic Integrity (ICAI).</p> <p>National Academic Integrity Network (NAIN).</p>

<b>Related SNMCI Policies / Forms/Resources</b>	Student facing Resources Staff facing Resources GQA 7.8 A: Academic Integrity Faculty Checklist GQA 7.8 B: Academic Integrity Student Checklist FQA 7.8: Lecturer Report Template College Handbook; Lecturer Handbook; Programme Specific Handbooks; Referencing Handbook; Student Charter; Academic Integrity Student Pledge; Study Guide; QA 7.9: TOR Disciplinary Committee;
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#### Revision

<b>Revision Number</b>	<b>Revision Description</b>	<b>Originator</b>	<b>Approved By</b>
3.0 /2019	General revision for reengagement	Office of Quality and Academic Affairs	Academic Board
4.0 /2021	Revision for Blended Learning	Office of Quality and Academic Affairs	Academic Board
5.0 /2023	Revision due to advances in artificial intelligence and artificially generated text software.	Office of Quality and Academic Affairs	Academic Board