Academic Integrity Policy for Faculty (LID-Pol-067)

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Related Documents	LID-Pol-062 – Teaching and Learning Policy LID-Pol-070 – Disciplinary Policy and Procedure for Faculty QA-Pol-097 – Programme, Monitoring and Review Policy LID-SOP-056 – Academic Integrity Procedure for Faculty

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish standards for the conduct of academic work, to include considerations for the detection and investigation of academic misconduct, and to agree appropriate sanctions.

This policy is based on principles of best practice and guidance provided by Quality Qualifications Ireland (QQI).

2. Scope

This policy applies to all faculty in relation to RCPI education programmes.

3. Principles of Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is the commitment to and demonstration of honest and moral behaviour in an academic setting. The five core values we work towards are:

- Accuracy – making sure that your work is free from errors.
- Honesty – being truthful about which ideas are your own and which are derived from others, and about the methods and results of your research.
- Fairness – not trying to pass off others' work as your own.
- Responsibility – taking an active role in seeking out the information you need to teach effectively.
- Respect – for your fellow faculty and the work of other scholars.

(Adapted from International Center for Academic Integrity (2014))

Academic Misconduct is defined as acts or omissions which provide, or could provide, an unfair advantage in an RCPI assessment, or which might assist someone else to gain an unfair advantage or is an activity likely to undermine the professional integrity essential to scholarship and research.

Poor Academic Practice involves unintentional errors or lapses in judgement which may be attributed to a lack of experience or knowledge. This can include incorrect citation, poor understanding of plagiarism, or minor procedural mistakes.

RCPI approach to maintaining Academic Integrity

3.1 RCPI provides Faculty with guidance and information on how to demonstrate critical enquiry and evaluation skills and techniques and information on the meaning of academic integrity, plagiarism, and the consequence for breaches of good academic practice.

3.2 Faculty must:

- Ensure they participate in all programmes work and follow guidance provided by the Programme Board
- Make themselves aware of the principles of this Policy
- Learn how to cite and reference properly

3.3 RCPI will monitor academic misconduct and other breaches of standards. This includes, but is not limited to, the use of text-matching software such as TurnItIn, and software to detect inappropriate use of generative AI.

3.4 RCPI promotes good academic practice and communicates the consequences of not meeting the tenets of this policy.

1.1 In terms of academic misconduct, RCPI recognises that there is a distinction between Poor Academic Practice, Minor and Gross Academic as defined in the Appendix of this policy.

4. **Investigation in the case of academic misconduct**

4.1 Allegations of academic misconduct may be received from a variety of sources, including but not limited to faculty members, programme management staff, fellow learners, or external parties such as examiners or clinical supervisors involved in the assessment process.

4.2 All allegations of academic misconduct are reported to the Head of Function.

4.3 RCPI investigates all allegations of a member of Faculty's academic misconduct using the Academic Integrity Procedure for Leaners (LID-SOP-068).

4.4 The investigation of alleged misconduct is fair and follows due process.

4.5 Faculty may be suspended from involvement with an education programme pending an investigation, and in all such cases, the investigation is processed as a priority.

4.6 Faculty is responsible for their own conduct and are assumed to be capable of making informed decisions about their behaviour.

4.7 Faculty accused of academic misconduct is entitled to know the detail of the accusation made against them and is given the opportunity to respond.

4.8 Where appropriate and feasible, RCPI will seek to resolve any breach of good academic practice without the requirement to invoke formal disciplinary proceedings.

4.9 Serious instances of academic misconduct are referred to Stage 2 of Disciplinary Policy and Procedure (LID-Pol-070).

5. Penalties in the instance of academic misconduct

Potential consequences for academic misconduct are determined on a case-by-case basis and can include withholding of a professional reference.

5.1 RCPI may dismiss Faculty in serious situations involving:

- Health and safety breaches
- Breaches of academic policies
- Bringing themselves, the College or their profession into disrepute

6. Reference Documents

Christensen Hughes, J., Eaton, S. (2022). Academic Misconduct in Higher Education: Beyond Student Cheating. In: Eaton, S.E., Christensen Hughes, J. (eds) Academic Integrity in Canada. Ethics and Integrity in Educational Contexts, vol 1. Springer, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-83255-1_4

ENQA (2015) Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG)

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Quality Qualifications Ireland (2016) Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines

https://www.qqi.ie/Downloads/Core%20Statutory%20Quality%20Assurance%20Guidelines.pdf

Quality Qualifications Ireland (2017) Policies & Criteria for the Validation of Programmes of Education & Training

https://www.qqi.ie/Publications/Publications/Initial_Validation_policy_7_10_13.pdf

International Center for Academic Integrity (2014), The Fundamental Values of Academic Integrity 2nd ed
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Parrish, D. and Marcovitch, H. (2012) *International models for responding to research misconduct*, *https://www.councilscienceeditors.org*. Available at: https://www.councilscienceeditors.org/3-2-international-models-for-responding-to-research-misconduct (Accessed: 09 September 2024).

Ray, Sumantra (Shumone), and others (eds), 'Fraud and misconduct', in Sumantra Ray, and others (eds), *Oxford Handbook of Clinical and Healthcare Research*, 1, Oxford Medical Handbooks (Oxford, 2016; online edn, Oxford Academic, 1 Mar. 2016), https://doi.org/10.1093/med/9780199608478.003.0025, accessed 9 Sept. 2024.

Resnik, D.B. (2023). Research Misconduct and Questionable Research Practices. In: Valdés, E., Lecaros, J.A. (eds) *Handbook of Bioethical Decisions. Volume II. Collaborative Bioethics, vol 3*. Springer, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-29455-6_3

Turnitin text matching software

https://www.turnitin.com/

Appendix 1: Examples of Academic Misconduct and Poor Academic Practice

Academic Misconduct is defined as acts or omissions which provide, or could provide, an unfair advantage in an RCPI assessment, or which might assist someone else to gain an unfair advantage or is an activity likely to undermine the professional integrity essential to scholarship and research. Examples of Academic Misconduct include:

Gross Academic Misconduct

Major Academic Misconduct refers to serious breaches of academic integrity that involve deliberate intent to deceive or significantly undermine the academic process. Examples include, but are not limited to:

Falsification of data	Deliberately altering or fabricating research data or results to mislead others
Plagiarism (extensive)	Copying large sections of text, ideas, or research from another source (including Gen AI tools) without appropriate attribution. This may occur individually or across multiple submissions .
Contract cheating	Paying or coercing someone else to complete an assessment or research on your behalf.
Sabotage	Intentionally damaging or destroying another learner's research or academic work to hinder their progress.
Collusion	Collaborating with another person(s) in an academic activity that is meant to be completed individually and falsely presenting it as independent work .
Impersonation	Pretending to be another person to take an exam or submit work or allowing someone else to impersonate you .
Fabrication or Forgery	Falsifying official documents (transcripts, letters of recommendation etc) Claiming academic qualifications or credentials you did not earn .
Misrepresentation of authorship	Falsely claiming authorship or credit in group research or academic activity without having contributed.
Repeated plagiarism	Engaging in plagiarism despite prior warnings or sanctions .
Tampering with assessments	Altering graded exams, assignments, or other assessments after they have been marked and submitting them for regrading under false pretences .
Unauthorized access to exam materials	Gaining, attempting to gain, or providing others with access to exam materials outside of when the exam is administered .

Minor Academic Misconduct involves less serious breaches of academic integrity, often resulting from carelessness or misunderstanding, but still represents intentional acts.

Plagiarism (small sections)	Copying brief sections of text or ideas (including from Gen AI tools) without citation. This may be due to carelessness or misunderstanding but is beyond the scope of an isolated accident.
Self-plagiarism	Reusing one's own previously submitted work in a new assignment without proper citation.
Incorrect paraphrasing	Attempting to paraphrase but failing to sufficiently change the wording or structure of the source material.

Improper citation	Using incorrect citation formats or missing citations for parts of the work. Compounding plagiarism by using AI generated citations which do not exist.
Collaboration in individual assignments	Working with others on an assignment that was meant to be completed individually, even if no one else's work is directly copied.
Copying minor portions of another learner's work	Copying small sections of another learner's work, such as a sentence or two, with or without their knowledge, or allowing your work to be copied in the same way.
Minor data embellishment	Slightly exaggerating research results without fundamentally changing the conclusions
Failure to declare conflicts of interest	Omitting to disclose personal or financial relationships that may bias research or an academic activity.
Repeated poor academic practice	Continuously engaging in citation or paraphrasing mistakes after receiving guidance, leading to accusations of misconduct

Poor Academic Practice involves unintentional errors or lapses in judgement which may be attributed to a lack of experience or knowledge. This can include incorrect citation, poor understanding of plagiarism, or minor procedural mistakes.

Improper citation formatting	Failure to adhere to referencing guidelines due to misunderstanding of the citation requirements.
Inadequate paraphrasing	Paraphrasing a source too closely to the original article without the intent to mislead. Presenting work with appropriate paraphrasing but without citation due to confusion about the requirement to cite the source.
Missing citations for common knowledge	Failure to appropriately cite commonly known facts.
Inconsistent referencing style	Using multiple referencing styles within the one submission due to misunderstanding / unfamiliarity with the requirement format.
Unintentional reliance on sources	Over-reliance on the structure and ideas of sources materials, even when trying to present original ideas. This may indicate poor critical thinking or synthesis skills.
Over-citation	Excessive citing of the same source due to misunderstanding as to the breadth / depth of research required in a given activity.

Confusing one's personal opinion	Academic writing that blends the learner's opinions with sourced information in a way which lacks clarity of which ideas are the learner's and which are attributable to others.
Unintentional Collaboration	Discussing ideas or drafts submissions with peers but crossing a boundary into collaborating on an individual assignment.
Inaccurate bibliography	Incomplete, inconsistent or incorrect sources in a bibliography due to unfamiliarity with reference management techniques or tools.