# Academic Integrity
## Guidelines

# CONTENTS

# PREFACE

The National Academic Integrity Network (NAIN) is a national peer-driven network of staff members from Irish higher education institutions (nominated by their Registrars), student representatives, and higher education representative agencies with governance and oversight provided by the NAIN Steering Committee. The network is coordinated by Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) and hosted on the QQI website.

As part of the work of the NAIN, the Academic Integrity Guidelines have been developed and produced by a Working Group, chaired by Dr Yvonne Kavanagh, following an extensive process of consultation with both the higher education institutions and a broad range of external stakeholders. The purpose of these advisory (non-statutory) Guidelines is to provide support and advice to Irish higher education providers and professionals nationally to enable a constructive and robust approach to academic integrity, including academic misconduct, within and across Irish higher education.

The NAIN would like to thank all the contributors to this process including the NAIN members, HEI staff, external stakeholder groups, and others who have shared their insights and provided feedback on the various versions of the Guidelines, prior to this June 2021 published copy. It should be noted that the Guidelines are published online and constitute a dynamic document, which will be reviewed regularly by the NAIN, incorporating relevant feedback as received from users and other professionals involved in this field. This should ensure that the Guidelines continue to reflect current trends and developments in the field of academic integrity and incorporating feedback as received from users and other professionals involved in this area.

You can find out more about the work of the NAIN here .

# Introduction

# 1.   Introduction

The [National Academic Integrity Network](#)[1] is committed to providing advice and guidance to academics and learners, professional services staff, researchers, institutional management personnel and all stakeholders involved in upholding and supporting a culture of academic integrity in Irish higher education and training. These Guidelines have been developed by the National Academic Integrity Network (The Network) to support the achievement of that objective.

The security and, therefore, integrity, of academic standards is central to trust and confidence in higher education; a fundamental key to securing standards is the integrity of assessment. The challenges presented to upholding academic integrity have been compounded in the context of increasingly sophisticated, accessible and low-cost cheating services. Developing strategies, underpinned by institutional policies and procedures, to protect and reinforce academic integrity is even more important as providers and learners adapt to the new realities represented by blended and online learning.

The Network has produced tools to assist providers in this regard. A common national understanding of what actions and behaviours constitute 'academic integrity' and 'academic misconduct' has been lacking to date, with individual providers using their own local definitions, not all of which are compatible or consistent with each other. Individual and collective responsibilities in terms of preventing, identifying and sanctioning academic misconduct also differ from provider to provider or are not clearly differentiated.

To address these gaps and vulnerabilities, the Network has produced the **Academic Integrity: National Principles and a Lexicon of Common Terms**.[2] The Network has also produced these Guidelines to support the sector to collectively define and understand academic integrity; what it means within a higher education institution; what challenges it raises; and to implement a robust approach to preventing, detecting, and sanctioning academic misconduct.

Specifically, the Guidelines offer advice on:

- Upholding academic integrity

- Preventing academic misconduct

- Detecting academic misconduct

- Dealing with academic misconduct

---

1   Please see Appendix 1 for further information on the National Academic Integrity Network.
2   NAIN (2021) Academic Integrity: National Principles and a Lexicon of Common Terms.

# 1.1 Purpose and Scope of the non-statutory Academic Integrity Guidelines

These Guidelines have been produced by the Network to offer advice to higher education management and all staff[3] on ways in which academic integrity can be cultivated and embedded in institutional practices. This includes raising awareness of academic integrity and encouraging behaviours and attitudes which enable a culture of trust, openness and integrity in relation to all aspects of education. Such a culture supports the active recognition and integration of academic integrity principles and practices as core elements of a provider's institutional governance and quality assurance policies and procedures. In this way, this can help maintain confidence in both the individual qualifications awarded and in the qualifications system as a whole.

**These are advisory (non-statutory) Guidelines, which are dynamic, and are published online. These will be reviewed and updated on a regular basis.**

These Guidelines have been informed by research and international best practice in academic integrity and in consultation with the Irish higher education sector.[4]

It is recommended that the Guidelines set out in this document are considered in conjunction with QQI's Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines (2016)[5]; Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines for Providers of Blended Learning Programmes (March 2018)[6] and the National Research Integrity Forum's (NRIF) National Policy Statement on Ensuring Research Integrity in Ireland (IUA, 2019)[7].

This guidance document:

1. Provides a framework to support higher education providers in reviewing and updating their current policies on academic integrity and creating a strategic awareness of academic integrity across their institutions, founded on ethical principles, transparency and The Fundamental Values of Academic Integrity (ICAI)[8]. A useful reference here is also the WHO Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct (2017)[9];

2. Outlines what creating and fostering a culture of institutional academic integrity means in terms of provider governance and quality assurance policies and processes;

3. Outlines the responsibilities of higher education providers to ethically and responsibly raise awareness of actions that

---

3   This includes all staff working in an HEI who have contact with, or responsibility for, enrolled learners.

4   Consultation with the higher education sector took place through the summer of 2020. Observations were also elicited from external stakeholders in Quarter 1, 2021 through a dedicated process. Feedback was considered and incorporated as appropriate.

5   QQI (2016) Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines. https://www.qqi.ie/Downloads/Core%20Statutory%20Quality%20Assurance%20Guidelines.pdf [Accessed 26 April 2021]

6   QQI (2018) Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines for Providers of Blended Learning Programmes. https://www.qqi.ie/Publications/Publications/Statutory%20QA%20Guidelines%20for%20Blended%20Learning%20Programmes.pdf [Accessed 26 April 2021]

7   NFRI (2019) National Policy Statement on Ensuring Research Integrity in Ireland. https://www.iua.ie/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/IUA_Research_Integrity_in_Ireland_Report_2019.pdf [Accessed 14 June 2021]

8   International Center for Academic Integrity [ICAI]. (2021). The Fundamental Values of Academic Integrity. (3rd ed.). 20019_ICAI-Fundamental-Values_R11.pdf (academicintegrity.org) [Accessed 26 April 2021]

9   WHO (2017) World Health Organisation, Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct. https://www.who.int/about/ethics/code_of_ethics_full_version.pdf [Accessed 26 April 2021]

they and their staff may take to forestall and prevent academic misconduct;

4.  Recommends an approach for higher education providers to deter and detect incidents of academic misconduct within an institution-wide culture of academic integrity, and

5.  Outlines the recommended best practice for higher education providers in terms of addressing and sanctioning incidents of academic misconduct.

For the purposes of this document, the National Academic Integrity Network (NAIN) **Lexicon of Common Terms** for academic integrity and related concepts is used throughout this document.

# 1.2 To whom do these Guidelines apply?

These Guidelines are designed to support all members of the academic community across the Irish higher education sector to uphold and embed academic integrity. These Guidelines are based on the premise that upholding academic integrity is the collective responsibility of all involved in higher education – academic integrity is everyone's business both within institutions and across the national higher education landscape. This includes teaching staff, programme developers, professional support staff, librarians, international officers, quality officers, senior managers, learners and their representatives amongst others. Enrolled learners are at the centre of these Guidelines and it is fully acknowledged that they have a leading role in terms of their own behaviour in upholding academic integrity and in providing peer support to other learners to enable them to withstand the temptation to cheat, facilitate cheating or otherwise act in a fraudulent manner.

The Guidelines are addressed to the range of staff across higher education institutions. This is to ensure that best practice for supporting academic integrity is prevalent and identifiable across the whole institution. Academic integrity should be evident in all relevant policies and procedures including, but not exclusive to, programme development, monitoring and review, assessment, teaching and learning methodologies, feedback mechanisms, professional development programmes for staff, supports and training for learners, and information for external stakeholders, etc.

These Guidelines are designed to assist staff to:

- further their understanding of academic integrity and related issues; and

- establish practices which uphold the principles of academic integrity and thus enable the development of effective learning and appropriate academic study, writing and related skills on the part of learners.

These Guidelines are intended to be of assistance to all higher education providers providing classroom, face-to-face, work-based, remote, online, blended, and laboratory-based teaching, learning and assessment. It is recommended that these Guidelines also be implemented by providers in relation to types of provision (e.g., micro-credentials, 'digital badges') which speak to the standards and, ultimately, the high quality and academic reputation of the provider.

# What is Academic Integrity?
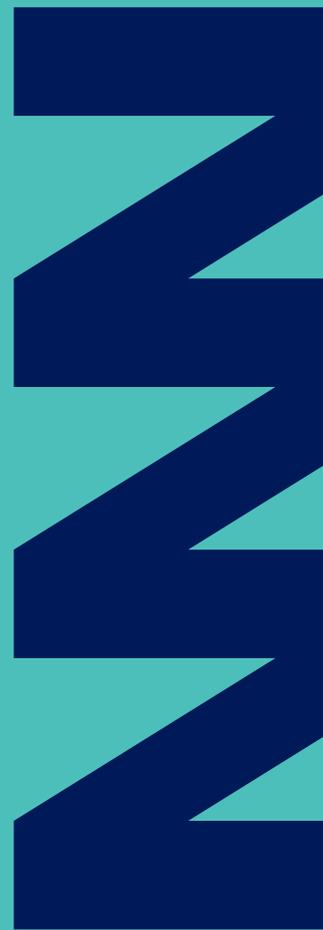
# 2 What is Academic Integrity?

'**Academic integrity is the commitment to and demonstration of honest and moral behaviour in an academic setting**'[10]

It assumes that all interactions with the higher education institution are approached with the value system of honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility and courage[11]. This includes all documentation and artefacts submitted to the institution for academic purposes. Responsibility for demonstrating academic integrity lies with the enrolled learner. The Network has adopted the following definition of academic integrity as taken from the ENAI Glossary:

'**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**'.[12]

Institutional quality assurance (QA) policies, procedures and practices should reflect a consistent approach to academic integrity. Academic integrity and related concepts are culturally specific. These Guidelines have been developed for, and are located within, an Irish higher education context.

Academic integrity reflects a commitment to ethical behaviours and practices which support learning, and assessment of this learning. Upholding academic integrity within an institution is dependent on all stakeholders working together in partnership to enable and embed it as an inherent part of the institutional culture.

A key component of academic integrity is assessment integrity, i.e., the principles of honest and trustworthy assessment, are upheld so that the learner undergoes a fair assessment of their learning to determine whether programme / module learning outcomes have been achieved.

Conversely, academic misconduct has taken place when a learner has behaved in a way which undermines and corrupts the integrity of the assessment.

The Network has defined academic misconduct 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.**[13]

The Network further elaborates on academic misconduct as follows:

**All actions which contravene academic integrity. These include breaches of examinationregulations,cheating,plagiarism, impersonation, purchase of examination material, data falsification and other acts which dishonestly use information to gain academic credit.**

---

10   The Writing Center, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill https://writingcenter.unc.edu/esl/resources/academic-integrity/ [Accessed 26 April 2021]

11   International Center for Academic Integrity [ICAI]. (2021). The Fundamental Values of Academic Integrity. (3rd ed.). p. 4 www. academicintegrity.org/the-fundamental-valuesof-academic-integrity [Accessed 26 April 2021]

12   ENAI (2018) Glossary for Academic Integrity. http://www.academicintegrity.eu/wp/glossary/ [Accessed 13th April 2021]

13   NAIN (2021) Academic Integrity: National Principles and Lexicon of Common Terms drawing on ENAI Glossary for Academic Integrity – Academic Dishonesty. http://www.academicintegrity.eu/wp/glossary/ [Accessed 13th April 2021]

**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.**[14]

Academic misconduct can be either intentional or inadvertent. It can be committed in a variety of ways (including, but not exclusive, to the following):

- Submitting work as your own for assessment, which has, in fact, been done in whole or in part by someone else or submitting work which has been created artificially, e.g., by a machine or through artificial intelligence. This may be work completed for a learner by a peer, family member or friend or which has been produced, commercially or otherwise, by a third party for a pre-agreed fee (contracted); it may be work in which the learner has included unreferenced material taken from another source(s) (plagiarism); it may be use of a ghost writer to carry out assessed work which is then submitted as the learner's own work; it may be using a previous assignment as submitted by a peer claiming it to be your work; it may be that references have been falsified to give credibility to the assignment and to show evidence of research; it may be a claim for authorship which is false;

- Cheating in exams (e.g., crib notes, copying, using disallowed tools, impersonation);

- Cheating in projects (e.g., collusion; using 'essay mills' to carry out the allocated part of the project);

- Selling or simply providing previously completed assignments to other learners;

- Misrepresenting research (e.g., data fabrication, data falsification, misinterpretation);

- Bribery, i.e., the offering, promising, giving, accepting or soliciting of an advantage as an inducement for an action;

- Falsification of documents;

- Improper use of technology, laboratories, or other equipment;

- Helping a peer to do their assignment which develops into the helper doing some or all of the assignment; and

- Sharing or selling staff or institutional intellectual property (IP) with third parties without permission.

A key approach to counteract academic misconduct and dishonesty in higher education is to develop, promote, and consistently apply institution-wide strategies and procedures to promote a culture of academic integrity.

---

14   NAIN (2021) Academic Integrity: National Principles and Lexicon of Common Terms drawing on ENAI Glossary for Academic Integrity – Academic Misconduct. http://www.academicintegrity.eu/wp/glossary/ [Accessed 13th April 2021]

# Academic Integrity Guidelines

## (non-statutory)

# 3.1    Upholding Academic Integrity

The higher education provider promotes an understanding of academic integrity amongst its academic community, and each member of that academic community upholds academic integrity and implements steps to prevent academic misconduct by learners. Academic integrity is visible throughout the institution.

As part of an institutional policy framework for academic integrity, the institution ensures that its policies are underpinned by procedures and practices to enable the effective implementation of these policies. In particular, procedures for the detection and sanctioning of academic misconduct are fit for purpose, accessible, applicable and consistently and openly applied and followed.

To achieve this objective, the following is in place:

### 3.1.1

There is a strategic approach to academic integrity which is explicit and this is shared with staff, learners and other stakeholders. This is reflected in an institutional strategic plan in which there is explicit reference to academic integrity. Decision-making structures also reflect a focus on academic integrity.

All planning takes account of academic integrity measures and it is clear to staff that they should incorporate academic integrity considerations into their planning and practices.

### 3.1.2

Policies and procedures acknowledge the importance of incorporating academic integrity into all teaching, learning and assessment approaches. This includes:

*   programme development
*   assessment design and implementation
*   pedagogical approaches
*   tutor relationships with learners
*   supports for learners
*   robust administrative systems for record-keeping.

Teaching techniques and assessment strategies are developed and adopted having regard to the provider's academic integrity policy and consider the types of academic misconduct possible within various assessment modes. These include, but are not limited to: work-based assessment, laboratory assessment, written examinations, essays, online assessments, digital and media-based assessments, group work and collaborative working. The teaching, learning and assessment policies promote positive learner behaviour and clearly communicate how one procedure relates to another.

### 3.1.3

An 'Organisational structure, to promote a sustainable and scalable approach to academic integrity'[15] needs to be in place. There are nominated staff and learner representatives who have particular responsibility for overseeing the upholding of academic integrity within the institution.

---

15    Bretag, T., Curtis, G., Slade, C. and M. McNeill (2019), Good practice in academic integrity encountered by the team during the workshops http://www.teqsa.gov.au/academic-integrity-toolkit [Accessed 13 April 2021]

This may take the form of an Academic Integrity Committee, an Office for Academic Integrity or identified individuals as befits the size and scale of the higher education provider. Staff are drawn from faculties, professional services including the library, quality offices, international offices, research departments, senior management and Teaching and Learning Centres, as appropriate, to reflect the range of staff with a role in upholding academic integrity and providing supports for learners.

There is a planned approach to training and support for learners in relation to academic integrity. As a part of this, academic integrity is a core component of any induction process(es). Recognition is given in these processes to learners and staff from different educational cultures, and content and advice is relevant and specific to the Irish higher education context.

### 3.1.4

Policy and procedures relating to academic misconduct are consistent. The approaches taken to assessment are clearly delineated in policy documents. All procedures to be followed in the case of 'reasonable doubt' of academic misconduct are clearly laid out both for staff and learners.

In cases of proven academic misconduct, the sanctions for the various types of misconduct are clearly documented, proportionate to the scale and seriousness of the offence and available to staff and learners.

### 3.1.5

Staff have professional development opportunities for training and awareness-raising in relation to academic integrity and the institutional approach to it. This may take the form of formal training leading to a qualification/ component of a qualification or may be part of a CPD programme or one-off workshops. It is suggested that all staff have engaged in a minimum specified training as provided by the institution to ensure a benchmark of staff understanding and engagement.

### 3.1.6

It is recognised that academic misconduct may manifest itself in different forms according to the specific field of study. Therefore, faculties and departments should have input to ensure that these differences are encapsulated and articulated in institutional policy.

### 3.1.7

There is a clear policy and procedures on English for Academic Purposes (including study skills) with supports available for international learners.

### 3.1.8

Policies and procedures are reviewed regularly to ensure they are up to date and continue to be fit for purpose.[16]

---

16    Bretag, T., Curtis, G., Slade, C. and M. McNeill (2019), Academic Integrity Myths Encountered by the Project Team https://www.teqsa.gov.au/sites/default/files/academic-integrity-myths.pdf?v=1591073898 [Accessed 26 April 2021] See in particular Myth 6.

## 3.2  Preventing Academic Misconduct/ Protecting Academic Integrity

Staff are up to date with regulations related to academic integrity, including assessment integrity, and understand their responsibility in relation to protecting the institution and its learners from academic misconduct. The higher education provider and its staff are aware of how best to support learners and prevent them from engaging with academic misconduct.[17]

Approaches to the prevention of academic misconduct may include:

### 3.2.1
Access is available to a repository of resources for both staff and learners which provides support in developing awareness as to what academic integrity is, how this awareness can be incorporated into good practice, and how breaches of academic integrity can be avoided[18].

### 3.2.2
Formal and informal conversations with learners on academic integrity commence with induction and are held on an ongoing basis throughout the period of enrolment. Opportunities for formal learner-to-learner conversations on academic integrity are facilitated.

### 3.2.3
Definitions and examples of what constitutes academic misconduct are communicated in straightforward language and are accessible to all members of the academic community. Teaching and professional staff explain and emphasise expectations of academic integrity, as well as provide clear definitions of what constitutes academic misconduct, early in and throughout the academic year to learners. In addition, learners are encouraged by those who teach to support academic integrity policies. Open and transparent discussion about academic integrity and academic misconduct are the most effective tools for creating an institutional culture where honesty is the expected standard, grounded in support, transparency and communication.

### 3.2.4
Training and advice for learners is in place on how to avoid engaging with academic misconduct, e.g., training in understanding what constitutes plagiarism, correct referencing, avoidance of online 'assignment help/writing services' when collaboration transitions into collusion, etc.

---

17   Research in Australia, as collated by TEQSA in its Academic Integrity Toolkit, has identified a number of 'controllable factors strongly associated with plagiarism and cheating' which are listed below:
  - Lack of understanding (Curtis & Vardanega 2016)
  - Perceived seriousness (Curtis & Popal 2011)
  - Perceived norms (Curtis et al. 2018; McCabe & Trevino 1993)
  - Lack of language proficiency (Bretag et al. 2018)
  - Poor time management and procrastination (Siaputra 2013; Wallace & Newton 2014)
  - Opportunities (Baird & Clare 2017; Bretag et al. 2018)
  - Lack of institutional support for academic integrity (Husain et al. 2017)
  - Student perception of staff apathy, knowledge and dedication (Husain et al. 2017)
  - No fear of detection and consequences (Deikhoff et al. 1999)
  - Student dissatisfaction with L&T environment (Bretag et al 2018; Park 2003)
  - Pressures and life complexity (Brimble 2016)

18   See QQI Repository of Resources [Accessed 26 April 2021]

**3.2.5**

Supports and guidance on academic study, writing and related skills are provided to all new entrants to programmes at all programme stages and can be accessed by all learners at any stage of a programme should a need for such support arise.

**3.2.6**

Other supports, relevant to the effective engagement of learners with their programme, such as English language support, study, writing and related skills development, and pastoral care are provided. Learners that are engaging with their programme of study effectively and have access to supports to help manage external pressures may be less likely to engage in academic misconduct.

**3.2.7**

Learners are advised and reminded of what constitutes good practice and advised of the consequences of, and procedures for, addressing and sanctioning academic misconduct in advance of assessment.

**3.2.8**

Learners are signposted to advice on what they should do to avoid academic misconduct i.e., the supports and services they can access such as teaching and learning centres, library services etc. Such advice and information on supports and resources is easily accessible. These may

include materials which learners and staff can access independently. This information is included in student handbooks, codes of conduct and course documentation in addition to online resources built into the Learning Management System.

**3.2.9**

An ethos of mutual trust and openness is facilitated between staff and learners, as is the development of open and supportive relationships between learners and key staff and/ or tutors.

**3.2.10**

Staff are aware of how to develop assessment methods which are appropriate and less susceptible to cheating practice. These are developed and shared with staff through training.[19]

**3.2.11**

Opportunities to engage in academic misconduct are minimised though creative, responsive, timely and innovative course and assessment design.

**3.2.12**

Staff are provided with access to continuing professional development in the areas of academic integrity, such as assessment design, and prevention and detection of academic misconduct.

---

19   See QQI (March 2020) Guiding Principles for Alternative Assessments. https://www.qqi.ie/Downloads/Guiding%20Principles%20 for%20Alternative%20Assessment%20(COVID-19)%2018-11-20.pdf [Accessed 26 April 2021]

**3.2.13**

Innovation is encouraged in teaching methodologies and assessment strategies to minimise the risk of academic misconduct. Steps are taken to reduce learner stress by appropriately managing the assessment schedule and by adequately preparing and equipping learners with the knowledge and tools required to engage with assessment methods.

**3.2.14**

The consequences of cheating are communicated and reiterated to learners through a variety of mediums and at relevant stages of the programme from induction to completion. The full potential impact of penalties and sanctions is clear. Learners are fully informed as to the significant and long-term potential damage they are risking by engaging with this type of behaviour, e.g., exposure to blackmail, loss of their award, loss of employment, etc.

**3.2.15**

A robust whistleblowing policy is developed in partnership with learners, emphasising the responsibilities of all members of the academic community to report suspected cases of academic misconduct.

**3.2.16**

Access to commercial websites and file-sharing sites which offer cheating services to learners, is blocked. Lists of blocked sites are regularly maintained. A list of these sites, or their marketing intent, could be published in an effort to enhance overall awareness and promote avoidance of same.

**3.2.17**

A collaborative approach is taken with other relevant stakeholders. For example, external stakeholders such as professional, regulatory and statutory bodies have an active role in promoting academic integrity and providing support to learners on their accredited programmes.

## 3.3    Detecting Academic Misconduct

Staff are enabled to recognise and report academic misconduct, thereby minimising its extent and impact. Learners are aware of processes in place to detect academic misconduct and the sanctions associated with it. They have access to resources and supports to enable them to engage effectively with their learning and assessments.

Approaches to the detection of academic misconduct may include:

### 3.3.1
An agreed institutional policy approach to detecting academic misconduct, online or otherwise.

### 3.3.2
Staff training is provided in recognising the signs that strongly indicate that work submitted is not that of the enrolled learner.

### 3.3.3
Staff are supported to investigate suspected incidences. There is a clear staff policy on what detection methods are available to staff across the institution, and the purposes of each of these methods. This is supported by training in the use of the relevant IT tools and interpretation of the results.

### 3.3.4
The detection systems in use are made known and explained to learners. This enables learners to understand the scrutiny which any suspected piece of work may undergo.

### 3.3.5
Evidence is collected based on raised suspicions. Evidence may include:

- Textual and electronic evidence from the suspected assessment

- Knowledge of the student's academic and linguistic abilities

- The student's previous assessment work.[20]

In some cases, additional/alternative historical or other data may apply.

Other tutors of the learner concerned are involved in the investigation so that they can give an informed opinion on the evidence being collected.

---

20    TEQSA (2019) Substantiating contract cheating: A guide for investigators. http://www.teqsa.gov.au/sites/default/files/substantiating-contract-cheating-guide-investigators.pdf [Accessed 13 April 2021]

# 3.4    Managing and Sanctioning Academic Misconduct

Institutions have robust and transparent procedures for responding to allegations of academic misconduct. Institutions are responsible for protecting those who report such behaviour.

Academic misconduct is situated in an ethical context. Learners are advised of the far-reaching personal and professional consequences of academic misconduct. The primary focus is on changing or safeguarding learners' behaviour so that they do not succumb to any form of misconduct. When misconduct is confirmed, appropriate actions are taken promptly. Staff feel empowered to take actions, i.e., they are supported by management to report their suspicions and there are appropriate and timely investigative and disciplinary systems in place once an issue has been formally raised.

Approaches to dealing with academic misconduct may include:

### 3.4.1
Regulations and procedures for investigating and responding to academic misconduct are set out in straightforward language and made accessible to all members of the academic community, both staff and learners. Disciplinary procedures ensure due process for learners suspected of misconduct. The regulations and procedures identify provider obligations under GDPR legislation regarding sensitive personal information and special category data.

### 3.4.2
Disciplinary procedures set out the circumstances in which the provider might take action against a current or former learner and whether such action is time limited. For example, disciplinary procedures may allow the provider to withdraw a graduate's award if the individual is found to have committed certain types of academic misconduct.

### 3.4.3
Learners subject to an investigation of misconduct have access to relevant supports throughout and after the process to ensure that the institutional duty of care is fulfilled. Where misconduct is confirmed, learners are obliged to participate in academic integrity training to enable them to effectively engage with their further learning in the institution.

### 3.4.4
Learners and staff are fully aware of the legislation[21] and what it means, if in situations where a learner is proven to have facilitated academic misconduct by another learner.

### 3.4.5
Detailed records of academic misconduct cases are maintained so there is data evidencing trends to inform effective prevention policy approaches.

21    Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education & Training) Act 2019. See Section 43A: http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2019/act/32/section/15/enacted/en/html#sec15 [Accessed 26 April 2021]

**3.4.6**

Access to commercial contract cheating websites and file sharing sites is blocked on campus.

**3.4.7**

There are systems in place for informing staff and relevant bodies, such as QQI, of commercial contract cheating companies which are active or present at an institution or on a campus.

# APPENDIX

# APPENDIX 1:
# The National Academic Integrity Network

## Background

The National Academic Integrity Network (NAIN) was established in November 2019. It identified two priority areas to be addressed by the Network in the first instance and established working groups to further its ambitions in these areas.

## Objective of the National Academic Integrity Network

The National Academic Integrity Network was convened by QQI in November 2019 on the commencement of Section 43A of the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012. The original Terms of Reference were updated in 2021 to reflect the maturing nature of the Network and its activities. The Network is focused on assisting higher education institutions to embed a culture of academic integrity and address the challenges presented by academic misconduct. To this end, the Network works to establish the nature of academic misconduct taking place in Irish higher education institutions; to identify and advise on appropriate measures institutions can take to educate staff and students, to develop approaches to prevent and address such misconduct; and to inform dedicated communications strategies.

The purpose of the Network is to advise and offer guidance on the identification of:

- the current landscape of academic integrity in Irish higher education;

- agreed principles of academic integrity;

- a lexicon of common terms and definitions in the field of academic integrity;

- identifying the roles and responsibilities of the key stakeholders in addressing this issue: HEIs, learners and QQI;

- good practice with regard to upholding academic integrity, preventing learners succumbing to academic misconduct through proactive measures, protecting learners from the lure of 'essay mills' and other types of cheating services, enabling the detection of suspected instances and sanctioning of proven academic misconduct reflecting the responsibilities of staff and learners to ensure academic integrity within institutions;

- a working methodology and procedures for the reporting and prosecution of instances of cheating within HEIs that are offences under the legislation;

- a strategy for HEIs to engage with learners as key partners in the embedding of a positive culture of academic integrity;

- key elements of a dedicated communication strategy for stakeholders;

- areas for dedicated enhancement activity and capacity building to support the nurturing of a culture of academic integrity in Irish HEIs.

## Network Membership

- The Network comprises the following members:
- Higher Education Colleges Association
- Irish Universities Association
- Technological Higher Education Association
- National Forum for Research Integrity
- A Chair of the Network
- HEI representatives nominated by their Registrar from each publicly regulated higher education institution, and a number of private colleges which provide QQI awards
- Irish Council for International Students (ICOS)
- Psychological Counsellors in Higher Education in Ireland (PCHEI)
- Librarians' Association of Ireland
- Student Affairs Ireland (SAI)
- Three HEI Student Union members
- Representatives from the Union of Students in Ireland
- QQI Academic Integrity Executive

## The Work of the Network

It was agreed that the first steps necessary in looking at academic integrity were to develop a common language to ensure mutual intelligibility. A working group was therefore convened to develop an agreed lexicon. This working group developed a glossary of commonly used terms for use in the Irish higher education context.

## NOTES: