

Policy Name	Academic Misconduct Policy
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Department / Area	Directorate of Resources, Marketing and Learner Services
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Scope

The Academic Misconduct policy works within the framework of the College's Vision, Mission and the underlying principles of the QAA code of practice.

The College will apply the principals to all staff and students including full-time & Part-time FE & HE, 14-16 and 19 plus learners, those on apprenticeship programmes, or Work based learning, including e-learners, distance learning, international students, and those on partnership programmes.

This policy will be applied to all examinations, course work, project work and any other work produced by the student.

1. Introduction

All students have the responsibility to establish, maintain and develop the academic standards and values necessary for study. Students maintain academic integrity by doing their own work, by refusing to assist others in deception.

Academic misconduct covers:

- Cheating
- attempts to cheat
- plagiarism
- collusion
- Any other attempts to gain an unfair advantage in assessment.

These forms of academic misconduct are entirely unacceptable for any student at the College.

This policy defines what the College means by plagiarism, and gives examples of the categories of other forms of unacceptable academic misconduct outside examinations. In establishing this policy, the College is seeking to maintain the integrity of its academic awards and procedures and to give any students affected a fair opportunity to respond to any allegation of academic misconduct. Each case will be determined on its own facts and merits. It may be necessary for the College to seek legal advice in specific cases.

The policy is for use outside public examinations, where the examining boards' own procedures will apply. It includes College-assessed work which contributes towards external examination marks.

Students will need to read and understand the policy and its implications, probably with the support of staff and a copy (Ref 3 A4 version), will be given to the learner at induction to sign to this effect. This will also be signed by the Personal Tutor and kept in the Student File. The text of the document will be placed in the Student Handbook for reference purposes. This would mean that no student should be able to deny knowledge of its existence.

2. Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the presentation of someone else's work, words, images, ideas, opinions or discoveries, whether published or not, as one's own, or alternatively appropriating the artwork, images or computer generated work of others, without properly acknowledging the source, with or without their permission.

Plagiarism by students is most likely to occur in a College outside sat, unseen exams, i.e. in coursework, assignments, portfolios, essays and dissertations.

Examples of plagiarism in such a context would include:

- a) Directly copying from written physical, pictorial or written material, without crediting the source;
- b) Paraphrasing someone else's work, without crediting the source.

3. Other forms of misconduct

Examples of other forms of academic misconduct (such as cheating, collusion and attempting to obtain an unfair academic advantage) would include:

- a) Getting someone else to produce part or all of the work submitted;
- b) Colluding with one or more student(s) to produce a piece of work and submitting it individually as one's own;
- c) Copying the work of another student, with or without their permission;
- d) Knowingly allowing another student to copy one's own work;
- e) Re-submitting one's own previously graded work;
- f) Using forbidden notes or books in producing assigned work or tests
- g) Fabrication of results (including experiments, research, interviews, observations)

The use of the word "academic" in the title seeks to define the scope of policy as it relates to the delivery and assessment of the curriculum. It is intended to include all College programmes.

4. Disciplinary Actions

All cases of academic misconduct will be dealt with, as appropriate, under the College's Disciplinary Code.

5. Staff Guidance – Prevention of Academic Misconduct

Plagiarism, cheating and collusion and attempting to obtain an unfair academic advantage are entirely unacceptable and not allowed. As such, these forms of academic misconduct will be subject to the College Disciplinary Code.

To prevent the occurrence of academic misconduct, staff should:

- a) Inform students clearly of the policy on academic integrity and honesty and of any guidelines on academic misconduct, recording the date(s) and occasion(s) for future reference
- b) Include statements on academic misconduct in College in the student induction process and course handbooks
- c) Make students aware of the penalties for academic misconduct at the earliest stage of the course

- d) Provide students with guidance on the format of formal acknowledgement of source material
- e) Inform students, in writing if possible, of the extent to which they can collaborate in coursework. Awarding body guidelines should be referred to
- f) Be aware that students are very computer literate and can scan text and surf the web for model essays, with ease. Wherever possible, ensure adequate access controls are in place and that students are adequately supervised when using computers to prevent students from copying or printing out other people's work as part of their own
- g) Devise procedures for assessing work in such a way that plagiarism, cheating and collusion are more detectable. This might include: -
 - *Ensuring that coursework assessment is supported by unseen and supervised work under test conditions*
 - *Changing assignment topics yearly, on at least a three-yearly cycle*
 - *Making less use of generic assignments in favour of tailored assignments*
 - *Getting to know the style of students' writing/submissions, early on in the course*
 - *Comparing subsequent work to initial assessment tests*
 - *Ideally, mark/assess a class group's coursework on a single occasion, to enhance the likelihood of the assessor spotting plagiarised passages*
- h) Fully investigate all instances of suspected academic misconduct utilising the proper disciplinary procedures.

6. Student Guidance – Academic Misconduct

6.1 The following are dishonest and therefore unacceptable and not allowed by the College:

- a) Taking someone else's work, images or ideas and passing it off as your own (This is called plagiarism).
- b) Using the computer, either the internet, or information stored on a hard copy or floppy disk which belongs to someone else, and passing it off as your own.
- c) Cheating, that is, acting unfairly or dishonestly to gain an advantage.
- d) Secretly agreeing with another to cheat or deceive. (This is known as collusion).

6.2 All these are called **academic misconduct**. If you are discovered or suspected of any of the above, the College will investigate and this may result in disciplinary action being taken.

This is what is expected of you whilst you are at the College –

- a) You will only hand in your own original work for assessment.
- b) You will show when you have used information provided by someone else by giving the person's name and where you found the information in your work (or in your portfolio). For example, if you use someone else's words

you will enclose the quote with inverted commas. You will also repeat this information at the end of the piece (this is called a bibliography/references section). Your tutor or lecturer will give you help with this. You should seek advice and guidance from tutors or LRC staff if you are unsure how to do this properly.

- c) You will show when you have downloaded information from the internet.
- d) You will never use another's disk as if it were your own work, nor copy work from a disk belonging to someone else and use it as if it were your own
- e) You will never use someone else's artwork, pictures or graphics (including graphs, spreadsheets etc.) as if they were made by you or let other students use or copy from your work and pass it off as if they had done it themselves.

6.3 All cases of suspected academic misconduct will be fully investigated using the College Disciplinary Procedures, in line with the Citizenship code usually at stages 3 or 4 dependent on the initial assessment of facts and level of plagiarised activity, this will be at the discretion of the academic Head of School.

6.4 The College classes some academic misconduct as gross misconduct. **This may result in exclusion from College.** Examples of Gross Misconduct include:

- a) Extensive copying of textbooks in one piece of work or limited copying in two or more pieces of work which makes a significant contribution to the work(s)
- b) Extensive plagiarism of professional works (more than 100 words)
- c) Using past candidates' work from previous years
- d) Repeated evidence of extensive use of information from the internet without acknowledgement or using model internet answers
- e) Buying, selling or stealing work
- f) Undue help from outside the College
- g) Repeated cases of misconduct.

6.5 In all instances of academic misconduct the College may:

- a) Inform the relevant examining body what you have done, in accordance with the examining board's policy
- b) Inform external examiners/verifiers of what you have done, in accordance with the examining board's policy

6.6 All learners will sign the Academic Misconduct statement at induction to show that they have read and understood the College rules on academic misconduct.