Academic Integrity Policy

Policy owner	**Approval date and body**
Office of the Registrar	Academic Council Executive Committee, May 2024
	Effective 1 September 2024

1.   Purpose

1.1 Introduction

Academic integrity requires every member of the academic community at UCD to act ethically, honestly and fairly. A lack of academic integrity in any sphere of university activity undermines the credibility and value of all that UCD does and of the awards that it makes to students. Every member of the UCD community shares responsibility for upholding the academic integrity values that underpin our scholarly practice in teaching, research, and student learning; activities that underpin the foundations of our intellectual community at University College Dublin.

This policy has been developed through consultation with faculty, students and the wider community of stakeholders in the university. It reflects current research and best practice nationally and internationally in academic integrity in higher education. In particular, this policy is informed by relevant national legislation[1] and is consistent with the principles and guidelines produced by the National Academic Integrity Network (NAIN), including the National Principle and Common Lexicon of Terms for academic integrity (NAIN, 2021); the National Academic Integrity Guidelines (NAIN, 2021) and the National Framework for Academic Misconduct Investigation and Case Management (NAIN, 2023).

UCD is committed to supporting faculty and students in embedding and nurturing a culture in which academic integrity flourishes and in which breaches of academic integrity are promptly, efficiently and appropriately addressed according to their severity.

1.2 Values

This policy is underpinned by the values of Honesty, Trust, Fairness, Respect, Responsibility, and Courage as identified by the International Center for Academic Integrity and articulated by the National Academic Integrity Network (NAIN).[2]

1.3 Objectives

This policy reflects the University's commitment to supporting and promoting academic integrity through:

  a) the development of a collective culture of responsibility around academic integrity fostered by all faculty, staff and students.

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[1] Section 43A of the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education & Training) Act, 2012 – Offence to provide or advertise cheating services.

[2] As identified by the International Center for Academic Integrity and articulated by the National Academic Integrity Network (NAIN, 2021, p. 4). The full text of the ICAI Values of Academic Integrity is accessible from: 20019_ICAI-Fundamental-Values_R12.pdf (academicintegrity.org)

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b) a clear framework of education, prevention, detection, sanctioning and record keeping so that UCD can both mitigate and respond appropriately to academic misconduct.

2.   Scope

This policy applies to all individuals engaged in academic work at UCD.

This Academic Integrity Policy is intended as a holistic and supportive statement that reflects the values of academic integrity upheld by students, faculty and staff in UCD. It not only outlines the University's expectations of students in relation to their assessed work, but also the various roles and responsibilities of faculty, staff and units in supporting students in their learning. It reflects sectoral developments by defining clearly certain academic misconduct behaviours. This policy complements the University's Research Integrity Policy. Both policies detail their application to research vs. taught students, as follows:

In relation to research it is expected that allegations relating to minor research assignments undertaken by students on taught programmes will generally be handled in the first instance under the Academic Integrity Policy, and its related procedures, and/or the UCD Student Code of Conduct. However, on either taught or research programmes, when allegations of academic misconduct are made in respect of research that appears in the published literature, is externally funded or is otherwise of a significance that merits handling through the UCD Procedure for the Investigation of Misconduct in Research, that latter procedure will be invoked. The Registrar or their nominee, following consultation with the Vice President for Research Innovation and Impact will decide which policy will take precedence in individual cases.

Unless otherwise stated, this policy applies in the context of collaborative, linked or shared provision and in all modules offered through such provision.

3.   Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 The University

The University sets standards of academic integrity and in this document sets out the definitions of academic misconduct. It also puts in place arrangements to:

a) Enable students to understand and observe academic integrity and avoid academic misconduct;
b) Inform and educate students about the policy for unacceptable practices in academic writing and assessment; and
c) Use electronic and other detection mechanisms, such as text-matching software, to identify instances of potential academic misconduct.

3.2 UCD Library

UCD Library provides education about, and promotes University policy on, academic integrity.

3.3 Schools

Schools arrange for students to receive advice and guidance on correct citation and referencing, on avoiding academic misconduct, and on the potential consequences of academic misconduct.

All policies and policy related documents and forms are subject to amendment. Please refer to the UCD Governance Document Library website for the official, most recent version.

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3.4 Heads of School

Heads of School develop and periodically review a School Academic Misconduct Protocol.[3] Heads of School also ensure that appropriate and timely student advisory arrangements are in place to promote academic integrity in the subject area(s) and to educate students about avoiding academic misconduct.

3.5 Module Coordinators

Module Coordinators ensure that their students are briefed on avoiding academic misconduct in the context of their module, prior to the students submitting assessments or taking examinations. Module Coordinators will, via the module descriptor, provide students with information on:

i. Expectations for citation methods in that module;
ii. Whether the use of generative artificial intelligence, or other machine learning technology, is permitted.

3.6 Research Supervisors

Research supervisors ensure that their students are briefed on avoiding academic misconduct in the context of their research work.

3.7 Students

Students ensure that they maintain academic integrity in all their learning and in the work completed by them. It is the responsibility of all students to:

a) act honestly and with integrity in all academic matters;
b) review the educative materials provided and complete any self-assessment as directed;
c) familiarise themselves with the expectations outlined in the module descriptor for each of their modules; and,
d) complete, where required, a declaration statement confirming compliance with this policy.

3.8 Additional Responsibilities

All parties must comply with the responsibilities outlined in both this policy and in the University's *Student Academic Misconduct Procedure*.

4.   Principles

The University upholds the principle of academic integrity and expects students to ensure that the intellectual efforts of others are acknowledged correctly in any material submitted for assessment.

4.1 Supporting Academic Integrity

All faculty / tutors / instructors are encouraged to educate students about academic integrity and to develop an open culture in which faculty, staff and students champion academic integrity. Supporting students in developing their learning and critical thinking is key and is formed within their disciplinary /

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[3] See *Student Academic Misconduct Procedure*

subject contexts. It is important that information about academic integrity is shared appropriately and acted upon so that:

- the University's expectations of students in terms of academic integrity are clearly set out and easily accessible.
- the definitions of academic misconduct are explained as per this policy.
- the module descriptors set out expectations regarding academic integrity for each specific module;
- students are directed towards materials regarding academic integrity through the provision of links to policies and other materials.

4.2 Course Work

Faculty / tutors / instructors are encouraged to set clear expectations in relation to course work and assessment tasks and indicate, for example, whether or not:

a) collaborative work is permissible or encouraged in any assessment task;
b) the extent of collaboration that is allowed in that assessment task; and
c) whether the use of Generative AI is permissible and under what conditions.

Module Coordinators should inform students about UCD's text-based similarity detecting software. It is at the discretion of the Module Coordinator to allow students to have access to the results of the detection software.

4.3 Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence Technologies

If permissible (by faculty/tutor/instructor) and when used appropriately, generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools can offer support across various aspects of the learning process. However, outputs from these tools must always be considered in the same manner as work created by another person/persons i.e. used critically, ethically, cited and acknowledged appropriately.

This academic integrity policy prohibits students from representing work as their own that they did not write, code or create. Accordingly, submission of AI-generated content without explicit permission and attribution is not allowed.

Given the diversity of disciplines and subjects across the university, faculty / tutors / instructors may use generative AI in different ways to support student learning. Acknowledging this:

- It should be indicated clearly in the module descriptor whether generative AI will form any part of the learning experience.
- All faculty / tutors / instructors may allow the use of generative AI to complete specific assignments.
- Specific guidance based on disciplinary expectations should be provided to students in the use of generative AI where it is permitted.
- Students are expected to follow each step of that guidance and properly acknowledge the use of generative AI in each aspect of their submitted work.
- If a student has any doubt about whether a specific use of generative AI is permitted for an assignment or course, they are responsible for discussing it with the faculty member / tutor / instructor prior to using it.
- Students must indicate clearly in submitted work the nature and extent of any outside assistance (including the use of professional tutors, machine learning or AI technologies) according to the citation practices set out by the relevant subject/discipline.

4.4 Assessment

Module Coordinators should pay careful attention to the design of their assessment so that students are clear about what is required both within the assessment and to avoid academic misconduct. Module Coordinators are encouraged to:

a) Review the assessment for each module every time the module is offered and redesign assessment tasks to discourage recurrence of any previously identified academic misconduct.
b) Where possible, not reuse assessment tasks in a way that enables students with knowledge or prior experience of those tasks to gain an unfair advantage for themselves or others.
c) Where possible, not reuse examination questions and assignment questions except when the Module Coordinator is satisfied that reuse will not:

      i.   jeopardise the academic integrity of the assessment; or
      ii.   create unfair advantage.

d) For MCQ-type assessment, adopt design measures and features to mitigate academic misconduct, such as: maintaining a dynamic repository of questions (question bank) to facilitate the creation of unique assessments, randomise and shuffle questions and answers, substitute numeric values, and variety of question type.

The Module Coordinator may stipulate assessment requirements, including but not limited to:

a) file submission type; and
b) submission of work-in-progress, including draft documents.

For work that is not a text-based written assignment, such as demonstrations, laboratory work, objective structured clinical examinations (OSCEs) or other skills-based activities, Module Coordinators are encouraged to take all reasonable steps to design an assessment that minimises the possibility of academic misconduct and, as far as possible provides confidence that:

a) the assignment is the student's own original work;
b) the work of others is appropriately acknowledged;
c) the assignment has not been previously submitted; and
d) the input of others does not exceed the bounds of legitimate cooperation.

5.   Definitions

Where feasible, and for consistency with practice nationally and internationally, UCD has reflected the definitions identified by the National Academic Integrity Network in its Lexicon of Common Terms.

5.1 Academic misconduct

Academic misconduct (also known as academic dishonesty or academic malpractice) "is any attempt by someone to seek unfair advantage in relation to [an] academic activity or which facilitates others to gain an unfair advantage, or to profit from the sharing or selling of your own or others' work without permission".[4]

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[4] NAIN, 2021(a), p. 3. Subsequent definitions in this section are taken from the NAIN Lexicon of Common Terms as indicated by quotation marks.

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Examples of academic misconduct include, but are not limited to the following practices:

(a) Plagiarism: "Presenting work / ideas taken from other sources without proper acknowledgement." Plagiarism is a failure to cite or otherwise acknowledge ideas or phrases used in any paper, exercise, assessment or project submitted in a course but gained from another source, such as a published text, another person's work, or materials on the internet.

Plagiarism includes presenting work for assessment, publication, or otherwise, that:

  i.   uses phrases, clauses, sentences, paragraphs or longer extracts from published or unpublished work (including from the internet) without appropriate acknowledgement of the source.
  ii.   presents direct extracts without quotation marks or other appropriate indication. It is not sufficient simply to acknowledge the source.
  iii. copies the same or a very similar idea from a published or unpublished work without appropriate acknowledgement.
  iv.   changes the order of words taken from source material but retains the original idea or concept without appropriate acknowledgement.
  v.   copies or uses, without appropriate acknowledgement, any material from non-written work including, but not limited to, visual and digital media, images, computer code, musical notation, recording or composition, performance or oral presentations

     or

  vi.   uses the work of another student without appropriate acknowledgement in a way that exceeds the bounds of legitimate cooperation.

Plagiarism is unacceptable in academic work, even where it arises as a result of:

  - poor referencing;
  - error;
  - inability to paraphrase; or
  - inhibition about writing in the student's own words.

(b) **Self-plagiarism**: Reusing one's own work without citing or acknowledging its original use. This could mean submitting one piece of work in more than one course.

(c) **Recycling**: The "practice of data fragmentation or salami slicing where the author(s) separate aspects of a study" or their work. "Writers should recycle their own material carefully and sparingly."

(d) **Misrepresentation of authorship**: The submission of someone else's work (or part thereof) as one's own, when the work (all or in part) has been produced by, or purchased from, another person or party.

(e) **Contract cheating**: a form of academic misconduct where "a person uses an undeclared and/or unauthorised third party, online or directly, to assist them to produce work for academic credit or progression, whether or not payment or other favour is involved". The NAIN Lexicon of Common Terms provides the following examples of contract cheating:

  - "Buying a completed assignment from a tutoring or ghost-writing company (purchasing from online essay mill websites);
  - Asking a partner, friend or family member to write part or all of an assignment for you;

- Paying a private tutoring company to coach you on how to complete an assignment;
- Submitting 'model' assignment answers provided by a private tutor or tutoring company;
- Getting someone else to sit an exam for you;
- Sitting an exam for someone else;
- Buying, selling or swapping assignments or assignment answers via 'sharing' websites or social media platforms. E.g., Facebook, TikTok etc." Six types of prohibited services available to students are:
    i. "essay writing services;
    ii. friends, family and other students;
    iii. private tutors;
    iv. copyediting services;
    v. agency websites;
    vi. reverse classifieds."

(f) **Collusion** or violating the limits of acceptable collaboration in coursework set by a faculty member or School, through "undisclosed collaboration of two or more people on an assignment or task, which is supposed to be completed individually". Examples of collusion include, but are not limited to:

- Using another student's work and submitting it for assessment as your own.
- Giving your work to another student to submit as part of their own assessment.
- Co-writing work, without acknowledgment, that will be submitted for assessment.
- Working with other students without permission to produce material that will be assessed or to produce responses to assessment questions.
- Using social media / chat rooms message groups to collude during the completion of online assessments.
- Inappropriately assisting another student with the production of an assessment task, including sharing answers or providing drafts or completed copies of an assessment task.
- If a student makes an inequitable contribution to a group assignment and claims credit for the work of others, this is collusion and may be considered as academic misconduct.

(g) Fabricating or falsifying data, information or sources of information in coursework or lab work, or forms submitted to the School/Module Coordinator/Instructor. This includes "Forging educational, research or scholarship content, images, data, equipment or processes in a way that they are inaccurately represented". And / or "Making up data and presenting that data as genuine".

Fabrication or falsification of data or information includes, but is not limited to:

- Misleadingly excluding data from analysis;
- Misinterpreting data to obtain desired results (including the inappropriate use of statistical methods);
- Producing false data or results under pressure from a sponsor;
- Data-related misconduct. Examples include:

    i. "Not preserving primary data where appropriate";
    ii. "Withholding data from the scientific community";
    iii. "Managing and / or storing data badly. The above applies to physical research materials as well."
    iv. "Selective citing to enhance importance of findings";
    v. "Establishing or supporting journals that undermine the quality control of research ('predatory journals')";
    vi. "Grossly exaggerating the importance and practical applicability of findings".

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(h) Facilitating academic dishonesty by assisting another student to obtain an academic advantage by dishonest or unfair means.

(i) Fabrication of credentials in materials submitted to the University as part of an admissions application or in materials submitted to the University for administrative or academic review.

(j) Inappropriately using digital or information technology to complete an assessment task; i.e., using such technology without explicit permission from relevant academic staff and / or not acknowledging use of such technology when its use is permitted Examples including, but are not limited to:

  i.   unauthorised and / or unacknowledged use of artificial intelligence tools to generate content for assessment purposes; or
  ii. unauthorised and / or unacknowledged use of paraphrasing or translation software to, for example, disguise plagiarism, collusion, contract cheating or other academic integrity breach.

(k) Inappropriately publishing, uploading or sharing an assessment, or part of an assessment, including responses to university assessment questions, to a website, or a file-sharing site or other online platform. To publish, upload or share such material without explicit permission from the owner of the material and / or the Module Coordinator may also be a breach of copyright laws.

(l) Inappropriately publishing or uploading University teaching or course material to a website, or a file-sharing site or other online platform. To publish, upload or share such material without explicit permission from the owner of the material and / or the module coordinator may also be a breach of copyright laws.

(m) Impersonation by "Undertaking in whole or in part any work required as part of a programme in the place of an enrolled [student], without permission …; Sitting an exam, or having someone else sit an exam in place of an enrolled [student]".

(n) Ghost-writing or authorship by use of "a non-named (merited, but not listed) author to write or prepare a text for publication." Examples of ghost writing include, but are not limited to:

  iii. Writing for or in the name of someone else;
  iv.   Assisting in the production of work resulting in unfair advantage to someone else.

(o) Copying or cheating at formal examination: To give or receive assistance in order to gain an academic advantage. Such assistance may include written material, another person or their work, or any other source during an examination or test; or to hire or attempt to hire someone to take your exam for you.

Academic misconduct in relation to formal examinations is identified in the UCD Student Code of Conduct and in the Examination Regulations. Some examples include:

- Copying or cheating at any examination or other assessments, such as an in-trimester test. This includes colluding with others during an online examination. This means seeking the assistance of others, or offering to assist others, during a period in which the examination is taking place.
- Sitting / attempting to sit an examination under another student's identity at any examination or in-trimester test.

- Arranging for someone else to sit an examination under your name / on your behalf.
- Bringing unauthorised notes or other materials into an examination or test.
- Use, or attempted use, of a mobile phone or any other unauthorised electronic device during an examination or test.
- Removing examination scripts, question papers or other stationery from an examination.
- Any other breach of the examination regulations or any action that may jeopardise the integrity of an assessment.

(p) Advertising cheating services and / publishing advertisements for cheating services: Students are prohibited from advertising any service which is considered to be academic misconduct under this policy (for example selling past papers or providing essay writing or assignment completion services). Students are also prohibited from publishing such advertisements, for example on their social media pages.

5.2 Generative Artificial Intelligence

Generative artificial intelligence technologies consist of a range of artificial intelligence (AI) tools that use models based on patterns learned from large quantities of training data to generate new text, audio, or other media. Large language models (LLMs) are a type of generative AI which understand and generate human-like content in response to varied prompts. They are referred to as 'generative' due to capabilities to create a range of content including text, audio, video, image and code by processing and analysing large volumes of data they are pre-trained.

6. Academic Integrity and the Classroom Environment

Academic integrity allows students and faculty / tutors / instructors the freedom to build new ideas, knowledge and creative works while respecting and acknowledging the work of others. This principle also extends to the classroom environment and the teaching and learning activities that take place therein.

- If a student wishes to make an independent recording of a classroom session (be that an in-person or virtual session), they must seek the permission of the relevant faculty / tutor / instructor in advance and may only use the recording for the purposes of their own personal study.
- Students with reasonable accommodation retain their right to record material. They will be in a position to show their permission from UCD Access and Lifelong Learning concerning their reasonable accommodation.
- Students must destroy any copy of the recording they hold once this purpose has been met. This will be on completion of the final assessment or when the student leaves the University, whichever is sooner.
- Course materials, including handouts, readings, slides, and attendant materials must be understood as the product of faculty/teachers' intellectual work, and treated as their property.

It shall be considered a breach of the UCD Student Code of Conduct for students to use, modify or distribute recordings without the permission of the module coordinator / lecturer including but not limited to:

- copying the recording;
- making copies available to third parties, or the public, by any means;
- renting or lending copies of it to the public, playing it in public or broadcasting it;

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A student using, modifying or distributing a recording without permission may be investigated under the UCD Student Discipline Procedure and/or the UCD Student Academic Misconduct Procedure.

The contents of class discussion and breakout rooms may not be circulated outside the classroom, in whole or in part, for non-educational purposes (e.g., on social media) or outside the UCD community. Student activity / discussion within breakout rooms should never be recorded.

7. Identifying and Investigating Student Academic Misconduct

As per the national *Framework for Academic Misconduct Investigation and Case Management*, UCD will "Investigate suspected [academic integrity] breaches as a lay proceeding, using the standard from civil law, where the 'balance of probabilities' is the relevant test to which allegations must be subjected. The balance of probabilities is based on 'clear and convincing evidence' that it is more likely than not that the allegation is true. This is less demanding than the legal test of 'beyond reasonable doubt'.[5]

Any work submitted for assessment may be subject to electronic or other detection procedures.

Where employed, electronic detection software, such as text-based similarity or AI detection software, should be used with caution and regarded only as one tool in assisting an examiner to make a judgement about academic misconduct. Any software used to detect academic misconduct in assessed work must be approved for use by the University.

- If academic misconduct is suspected by an examiner, the examiner should employ all reasonable means to clarify whether academic misconduct has taken place.
- Where, as a result of a student's performance in another assessment task within a module or component, an examiner forms the reasonable suspicion that an assessment may not be a student's own unaided work (excluding legitimate cooperation), the examiner must report the matter consistently with this policy and the procedures governing the investigation of academic misconduct and/or student discipline.
- Computer and systems records, including details of access to the Virtual Learning Environment, and other student online activity may be reviewed to identify or substantiate potential academic misconduct.
- The examiner or Module Coordinator can, after outlining their concerns, require a student to discuss or explain components of their assessment tasks to determine the authenticity of their work.

Any examiner or assessor who reasonably believes that a student has breached academic integrity requirements must report it to the relevant Module Coordinator and/or the person responsible for dealing with academic integrity.

8. Related documents

This policy should adhere to and be cognisant of other relevant University policies and regulations, with which all members of UCD Community must also comply. This policy should be read in conjunction with, at a minimum:

- UCD Student Code of Conduct
- UCD Examination Regulations

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[5] NAIN (2023) *Framework for Academic Misconduct Investigation and Case Management.* P. 26 Accessible from: NAIN Framework for Academic Misconduct Investigation and Case Management 2023.pdf (qqi.ie)

- *UCD Student Academic Misconduct Procedure*
- [UCD Research Integrity Policy](#)
- [UCD Authorship Policy](#)
- [UCD Procedure for the Investigation of Misconduct in Research](#)

9.   Version history

Version	Approval Body	Approval Date	Amendments
1.0	Academic Council Executive Committee	30 May 2024	