

Academic Integrity Policy

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1 Introduction

This document articulates University of Limerick's (UL) (also referred to as 'the University' in this document) academic integrity principles and standards. Academic integrity is the responsibility of all members of the University community, students, staff and the institution. A transparent, robust and fair academic integrity policy and academic misconduct procedures protects and maintains the reputation of UL and its members by endorsing the highest quality standards and academic practices.

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of the Academic Integrity Policy is to:

- Define academic integrity and academic misconduct.
- Describe actions and activities that are considered a breach of academic integrity.
- Outline the responsibilities of the University, educators and students in upholding and protecting academic integrity.
- Outline the responsibilities of the University in the provision of education, training and supports to educators and students to minimise breaches of academic integrity.
- Signpost to the procedures for managing allegations of academic misconduct within UL.
- Detail how cases of academic misconduct are recorded at UL.

1.2 Scope

1.2.1 To whom does the policy apply?

This policy applies to all undergraduate and postgraduate students currently or previously registered with or enrolled at UL.

Students who have completed or who are currently undertaking research degrees are subject to this policy when the academic integrity breach relates to a taught component of the research degree. Research misconduct is managed in accordance with the UL Research Integrity Policy.

Academic staff, professional support staff, those who are involved in, and/or contribute to teaching, learning and/or assessment of academic work that contributes to the award of academic credit for learning should be aware of and adhere to this policy.

1.2.2 In what situations does the policy apply?

This policy, and all relevant procedures, apply automatically to students upon registration with or enrolment at UL.

While visiting another institution for a period of study or research, UL registered students will be subject to the policies and procedures of that institution for the duration of their visit. UL reserves the right, where appropriate, to invoke this policy and associated procedures, in respect of UL students visiting another institution for study or research.

1.2.3 Implementation and Monitoring of Policy

The Academic Integrity Unit is responsible for the development, implementation, monitoring and review of this policy.

1.3 Definitions

1.3.1 Academic Integrity

UL adopts the National Academic Integrity Network (NAIN) (2025) definition of academic integrity that is derived from the European Network for Academic Integrity, which states that academic integrity is:

'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.'

1.3.2 Academic Misconduct

UL adopts the NAIN (2025) definition of academic misconduct:

'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.'

The UL *Procedures for Managing Allegations of Academic Misconduct* outlines actions or activities that are considered by the University as academic misconduct.

2 Context

2.1 Legal and Regulatory Context

2.1.1 Relevant Legislation and Guidelines

Academic integrity in Ireland is informed by both statutory requirements and non-statutory guidelines.

Section 43A of the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) (Amendment) Act (2019) empowers the Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) to prosecute those who facilitate academic cheating. The provisions cover: impersonation; provision of or advertising of cheating services and the publishing of advertisement for cheating. QQI is responsible for bringing prosecutions in respect of these offences. The UL Academic Integrity Unit support the reporting of those who facilitate academic cheating to QQI.

NAIN is a peer network of higher education institutions and associated organisations established to develop a national understanding of academic integrity. UL has been a member of NAIN since its inception. NAIN has produced a series of guidelines which have informed the content of this policy.

This policy is used in conjunction with:

- University of Limerick Procedures for Managing Allegations of Academic Misconduct

- University of Limerick Student Charter
- University of Limerick Handbook of Academic Regulations and Procedures
- University of Limerick Research Integrity Policy

3 Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 Students

It is the responsibility of the student to:

- Be familiar with and uphold the academic protocols, rules and conventions that relate to the assessment(s) of their module and/or programme of study.
- Seek clarification from an appropriate member of staff if they are unsure as to the protocols, rules or conventions pertaining to assessments.
- Ensure that all artefacts submitted by way of assessment are fully their own, or in the case of group work, that of the group as specified by the educator responsible for the assessment.
- Be willing to sign a declaration, if requested, that the work they submit as part of an assessment does not breach any of the elements of academic integrity described in this policy.
- Ensure that all the assessment items submitted are the assessment artefacts for which they wish to be assessed.
- Undertake any academic integrity education or training as requested by an educator or by the University and provide evidence of completion if requested.
- Co-operate with academic misconduct investigations and associated procedures if applicable.
- Be honest when engaging with all staff members, particularly if involved in an academic misconduct investigation.

3.2 Educators

Academic staff and those who are involved in, and/or contribute to teaching and assessment of academic work (collectively termed educators for the purpose of this policy) that contributes to the award of academic credit within the University have a responsibility to:

- Be familiar with and uphold academic protocols, procedures, rules and conventions that relate to academic integrity within the University.
- Engage with support materials and information events on academic integrity and academic misconduct to ensure that they are aware of their roles and responsibilities.
- Uphold the principles of academic integrity (described in Section 4.1) in teaching, learning and assessment activities.
- Implement the *Procedures for Managing Allegations of Academic Misconduct* when an academic integrity breach is suspected.
- Communicate with parties involved in academic misconduct investigations in an efficient manner using the required procedures.
- Keep records in accordance with the requirements of the *Procedures for Managing Allegations of Academic Misconduct*.

- Review assessment methods for modules and programmes for which they have responsibility, where applicable, to ensure that they are appropriate and minimise the potential for breaches of academic integrity.
- Signpost students to this policy and the *Procedures for Managing Allegations of Academic Misconduct*, when discussing academic integrity.
- Commit to being honest with students and the wider University community, when reporting allegations of academic misconduct or contributing to investigations relating to academic misconduct.

3.3 Academic Integrity Unit

It is the responsibility of the Academic Integrity Unit to work on behalf of the University to:

- Support educators and students in upholding the values of academic integrity within their work.
- Provide education and training to educators, Academic Integrity Champions and students to enable them to meet their roles and responsibilities described within this policy.
- Promote an ethos of mutual trust and openness between educators and students
- Implement all aspects of this policy and the *Procedures for Managing Allegations of Academic Misconduct*.
- Answer queries from educators and students regarding academic misconduct investigations.
- Signpost students to pastoral supports if involved in an academic misconduct investigation.
- Review and update this policy and the *Procedures for Managing Allegations of Academic Misconduct*.

3.4 Academic Integrity Champions

It is the responsibility of Academic Integrity Champions to:

- Uphold and promote the principles of academic integrity described in this policy.
- Provide advice to educators in relation to suspected cases of academic misconduct.
- Support academic misconduct investigations as described in the *Procedures for Managing Allegations of Academic Misconduct*.
- Refer queries to the Academic Integrity Unit.
- Undertake any necessary training to effectively discharge their roles and responsibilities.
- Make recommendations regarding this policy or the *Procedures for Managing Allegations of Academic Misconduct* based on experience and observations in their role.

4 Policy Statements

4.1 Principles of Academic Integrity

This policy is designed to uphold the six fundamental values of academic integrity defined by the International Centre for Academic Integrity (ICAI) (2021). Upholding the values of academic integrity is simultaneously an individual duty and a shared concern. Every member

of the UL community, each student, staff member and the institutional leadership are accountable to themselves and each other for safeguarding of integrity as it relates to teaching, learning and assessment.

4.1.1 Honesty

Every member of the UL community will be upright and truthful in their academic work, acknowledging both the work of others, and the processes and tools they have used, where applicable.

4.1.2 Trust

UL, through the Academic Integrity Unit, will foster an environment where students and staff can trust in the integrity of the academic qualifications and awards provided by the University. Students will promote trust by partaking in assessments in an honest, thoughtful and genuine manner. Staff will promote trust by establishing clear assessment guidelines and upholding these guidelines.

4.1.3 Fairness

Every member of the UL community, has a right to expect fair treatment and a duty to treat others fairly. Impartial, consistent, and just responses to dishonesty and academic integrity breaches are fundamental to educational fairness.

4.1.4 Respect

Members of the UL community will show respect by acknowledging the intellectual contributions of other scholars through proper identification and citation of sources and indicating where content has been generated by third parties or sources.

4.1.5 Courage

UL is determined that members of its community make decisions that exhibit integrity and have the courage to act on those decisions. Only by exercising courage is it possible to create communities that are responsible, respectful, trustworthy, fair, and honest and strong enough to endure regardless of the circumstances.

4.1.6 Responsibility

Every member of the UL community is accountable to themselves and each other for safeguarding the integrity of its teaching, learning and assessment.

5 Related Procedures for Academic Integrity

5.1 Procedures for Managing Allegations of Academic Misconduct

Taking a systematic approach to managing academic misconduct, the primary objective must be the support and promotion of academic integrity. The *Procedures for Managing Allegations of Academic Misconduct* outlines the steps that should be taken to manage breaches of this policy.

5.1.1 Standard of Proof for Academic Misconduct

When investigating allegations of academic misconduct, the accepted standard of proof is ‘on the balance of probabilities’. In other words, the decision-maker(s) overseeing the case believe(s), based on the evidence available to them, that it is more likely than not that an allegation of academic misconduct is true.

5.1.2 Sanctions for Academic Misconduct

The sanctions for academic misconduct will be proportionate to the nature of the academic integrity breach. Sanctions for breaches of academic integrity are outlined within the *Procedures for Managing Allegations of Academic Misconduct* and range along a continuum which include suspension and/or exclusion (expulsion) from a module or programme of study.

5.1.3 Academic Misconduct Register

When a student is found to have breached academic integrity their name will be entered in the Academic Misconduct Register.

This register will be managed by the Academic Integrity Unit in accordance with the UL Records Management and Retention policy.

5.1.4 Data Protection

All personal data held on the Academic Misconduct Register will be handled in compliance with UL's Data Protection Policy in particular those requirements relating to storage, access, data sharing and disposal.

5.1.5 Reporting of Suspected Breaches of Academic Integrity

Students can report suspected academic integrity breaches to the Academic Integrity Unit. Vexatious reports made by registered students will result in referral to the Disciplinary Committee.

Any individuals employed by UL, as well as parties external to UL, can also report suspected academic integrity breaches to the Academic Integrity Unit.

All reports of suspected breaches of academic integrity will be investigated and managed by the Academic Integrity Unit as described within the *Procedures for Managing Allegations of Academic Misconduct*.

5.1.6 Appeals

Students reserve the right to appeal the outcome of an academic misconduct investigation. The appeals processes are detailed within the *Procedures for Managing Allegations of Academic Misconduct.*

5.2 Maintaining a Safe Learning Environment

The University will block access to specific websites and filesharing sites which offer cheating services to learners or promote engagement with academic misconduct. Blocks will be implemented on campus wired and WiFi networks. Blocks may be temporary or permanent and a list of blocked sites will be regularly maintained.

Advertising of any services that promote academic misconduct will be considered to be a breach of this policy. Such advertisements will be removed from the physical or virtual campus environment.

5.2.1 Reporting Contract Cheating

UL will report the accounts of contract cheating providers to QQI.

QQI are able to prosecute these providers under Section 43A of the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) (Amendment) Act 2019.

5.2.2 Software to Aid Detection of Academic Misconduct

The University may use software to check the originality of students' assessments and for grading and feedback. Data or information available through this software (or detection systems) may be used as evidence of an allegation of academic misconduct.

Educators will be provided with the necessary training and supports to facilitate use of this software for assessment.

Detection systems will be made known and explained to students by the Academic Integrity Unit.

5.3 Implementation of Policy

The successful implementation of this policy relies on the co-operation and support of all staff, Departments, Schools, Faculties and Units within the University.

The Academic Integrity Unit will provide training on an ongoing basis to support the implementation of this policy.

5.3.1 Review of the Academic Integrity Policy

The policy will be reviewed at least every three years

5.3.2 Breaches of the Academic Integrity Policy

It is imperative that the policy is adhered to by all members of the UL community.

Failure to adhere to this policy and its associated procedures within a Department/School/Faculty/Unit will constitute a breach of this policy.

A suspected breach of this policy must be notified in writing (via email) to the Academic Integrity Lead.

6 Related Documents

6.1 Relevant UL Resources

- University of Limerick Procedures for Managing Allegations of Academic Misconduct
- University of Limerick Student Charter
- University of Limerick Handbook of Academic Regulations and Procedures
- University of Limerick Research Integrity Policy

6.2 Relevant External Resources

- International Center for Academic Integrity (ICAI). (2021). The Fundamental Values of Academic Integrity. Third Edition. Access here

- National Academic Integrity Network: Academic Integrity (NAIN). (2025). National Principles and Lexicon of Common Terms; Version 2 Quality and Qualifications Ireland. Access here

- National Academic Integrity Network: Academic Integrity (NAIN). Academic Integrity (NAIN). (2021). Academic Integrity Guidelines. Quality and Qualifications Ireland. Ireland. Access here

- National Academic Integrity Network: Academic Integrity (NAIN). (2023). Framework for Academic Misconduct Investigation and Case Management. Quality and Qualifications Ireland. Access here

- National Academic Integrity Network: Academic Integrity (NAIN). (2023). Generative Artificial Intelligence: Guidelines for Educators. Quality and Qualifications Ireland. Access here

7 Document Control

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