

Information Sheet A:

What is Academic Misconduct? Guidance for Tutors

What is Academic Misconduct?

There are five main types of academic misconduct, and tutors should be vigilant against all of them:

Collusion is the preparation or production of work for assessment jointly with another person or persons (except where group work is explicitly permitted by the specification and/or assessments guidance).

Plagiarism is the use, without acknowledgement, of the intellectual work of other people, and the act of representing the ideas or discoveries of another as one's own in written work submitted for assessment.

Impersonation is where someone other than the candidate prepares the work submitted for assessment.

Misconduct in examinations includes having access, or attempting to gain access, to any books, memoranda, notes, unauthorised calculators, or any other material which has not been supplied by the invigilator or authorised in the rubric on the front of the examination paper.

Fabrication of results or observations in practical or project work.

What is Poor Academic Practice?

Poor Academic Practice is the term used by NCC Education to describe circumstances in which a candidate is judged to have committed Academic Misconduct, but either through extenuating circumstances or a lack of severity it is not easily classifiable under any of the types of misconduct listed above. There must be some attempt to reference correctly and the vast majority of the candidate's work must be their own work, and any person(s) investigating must be satisfied that there was no intention to deliberately mislead the markers. Where a candidate fails to reference throughout an entire assignment, this is always deemed to be Plagiarism, even where unintentional and/or due to lack of understanding of referencing requirements.

How do I find misconduct in assignments?

All assignments should be uploaded to approved Plagiarism and AI detection software to obtain an Originality Report. If the report produces a similarity score of 20% or more for Plagiarism, the assignment should be examined for plagiarism. If the report produces a similarity score of 40% or more for AI, the assignment should be examined for misuse of AI. If any of the main types of misconduct listed above are detected, a penalty should be applied in line with Section 5 of the Academic Misconduct Policy.

It is important that a high similarity index is not used as justification for reduction of marks in itself, but that all reports with a high index are scrutinised and interpreted by a qualified marker to determine the cause of the high score and potential misconduct. An assignment with a similarity index of over 40% may in fact be completely acceptable, provided all quotations are properly referenced.

What should I do if I identify academic misconduct?

In Assignments:

A penalty should be applied in line with Section 5 of NCC Education's Academic Misconduct Policy.

Candidates are not permitted to work in groups unless explicitly stated in the rubric for an assessment. Any candidates whose work show an inappropriate level of similarity should have their marks appropriately reduced. If a candidate willingly permits a fellow candidate to access and copy their work, both candidates should be penalised.

If a marker uncovers plagiarism or other academic malpractice in assignments submitted by candidates, marks must be deducted as appropriate, and this should be recorded in the unit *Candidate Misconduct – Centre Declaration Form*.

In Examinations:

Cheating (or attempted cheating) during an examination needs to be recorded by the Invigilator in the Invigilator's Report. This report and the examination script must be submitted with the work for marking (for global examinations) and with the sample for moderation (for the local examinations).

Important: Please ensure that NCC Education is notified of all academic misconduct penalties applied during centre marking and/or internal moderation.

Please refer to NCC Education's Academic Misconduct Policy for further information.

