TITLE: *ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND PLAGIARISM POLICY*

Effective Date	24 May 2023	**Version**	5
			Policy revised to reflect changing definitions and guidelines produced by NAIN.
Approved By	Academic Council	**Date Approved**	24 May 2023
		Review Date	24 May 2028 *or as required*

Superseded or Obsolete Policy / Procedure(s)	**Owner**
4 – *Plagiarism Policy* (31 March 2021) Policy revised to include reference to take-homeexams	Office of the Registrar
3 – *Plagiarism Policy* (29 July 2020) Policy revised to include legislative changes in the area of academic integrity and the addition ofreferenced policies.	
2 – *Plagiarism Policy* (27 September 2017)	
Policy reviewed to ensure compatibility with the Assessments and Standards (Revised 2013), alignment with CCSP Policy on Policies and defined procedures / guidelines.	
1 – *Quality Assurance Handbook*, pp. 40 – 43 (6 December 2011)	
Initial Issue	

1. Purpose of Policy

The purpose of this policy is to set out the principles of Academic Integrity and the approach to dealing with plagiarism adopted by Carlow College, St. Patrick's (hereafter Carlow College). A key objective is to promote understanding of academic integrity and what constitutes academic misconduct and plagiarism. The policy sets out a consistent approach and clear guidelines for learners and assessors. It is informed by QQI Assessment and Standards (Rev. 2022) and the *Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training (Amendment) Act 2019 (Section 43A)*. It is also informed by the publications of the National Academic Integrity Network including NAIN (2021) *Academic Integrity: National Principles and Lexicon of Common Terms* and NAIN (2021) *Academic Integrity Guidelines.*

2. Definitions

Academic Integrity is a core value of Carlow College. It can be defined as 'a commitment to and demonstration of honest and moral behaviour in an academic setting'.[1] A key component of academic integrity is assessment integrity whereby full acknowledgement is given to the contributions of others in all work submitted for assessment purposes. When assessment is conducted in an honest and trustworthy fashion, the learner undergoes a fair assessment of their learning to determine whether programme / module learning outcomes have been achieved.[2]

Academic Misconduct can be either intentional or inadvertent, though intention does not negate individual responsibility to ensure academic integrity. Academic misconduct consists of any attempt by someone to seek unfair advantage in relation to 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.[3] A fundamental form of academic misconduct is plagiarism.

*Plagiarism***:** Plagiarism is the inclusion, in any form of assessment, of material without due acknowledgement of its original source. Plagiarism may include but is not limited to the following:

1. Submitting work in your own name which is wholly or partly authored by someone else e.g. a peer, family member or friend. This also includes using a previous assignment as submitted by a peer, claiming it to be your work.

2. Submitting work in your own name which has been purchased or otherwise obtained from an essay mill or other website (known as contract cheating). The original source may be in written form or in any other media (for example, audio or video).

3. Copying text (including ideas, concepts and data) verbatim (word-for-word) from an online or hard copy source without placing in quotation marks and referencing correctly.

4. Incorrect paraphrasing, presenting text (including ideas, concepts and data) with only minor changes (e.g., using synonyms or changing the sentence) from an original source; correct paraphrasing in your own words must also include appropriate citation of the original source material.

5. Misuse of online translating tools such as Google translate to re-write passages and then

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[1] The Writing Center, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
https://writingcenter.unc.edu/esl/resources/academic-integrity / [Accessed 17 November 2022]
[2] NAIN *Academic Integrity Guidelines*
[3] QQI can prosecute those who facilitate academic cheating *Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training (Amendment) Act 2019 (Section 43A)*

submit the work in your own name.

6. Submitting work in your own name which has been created artificially, e.g. by a machine or through generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools such as ChatGPT.[4]

7. Incorrect paraphrasing, presenting text (including ideas, concepts and data) with only minor changes (e.g., using synonyms or changing the sentence) from an original source; correct paraphrasing in your own words must also include appropriate citation of the original source material.

8. Presenting work for an assignment which has also been submitted by you (in part or whole) for another assignment at Carlow College or another institution (i.e., self-plagiarism).

9. Falsification of references to give credibility to the assignment and to show evidence of research that does not reflect actual material submitted. This also includes misrepresenting research (e.g., data fabrication, data falsification, and misinterpretation).

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

11. In addition to examples involving the written word, the copying and submission of other types of information, without attribution, is also classed as plagiarism. This includes, but is not limited to: diagrams, graphics, photographs, music and video files and experimental data.

The following are also considered to be forms of plagiarism and infringements of academic integrity:

1. Selling or simply providing previously completed assignments to other learners.

2. Helping a peer to do their assignment which develops into the helper doing some or all of the assignment.

3. Sharing information about an essay mill or other contract cheating service with a peer. Sharing or selling staff or institutional intellectual property (IP) with third partieswithout permission. This includes the circulation of material from Moodle.

3. Scope of Policy

This Policy is applicable to all learners in relation to work submitted for credit including, but not limited to essays, projects, portfolios and reports. It is also applicable to answers submitted for proctored (in-College) and take-home examinations.

4. Policy Statement

Carlow College aims to provide an environment where academic integrity is understood, promoted and supported (Appendix 1). A key objective is to educate learners and support them through their learning journey. It is recognised that learners do not enter the institution with a full understanding of academic writing, academic integrity values or practices. Explicit teaching of academic integrity occurs at various points in the degree programmes, e.g., as part of the Academic and Digital Skills Module, through workshops delivered by the Academic

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[4] This does not include the use of online writing assistants such as Grammarly where AI-powered suggestions, based on the users existing grammar patterns, can aid clarity of writing. This is in contrast to other AI or paraphrasing software / sites such as ChatGPT, SpinBot, QuillBot, Rephraser, paraphrasing-tool, Article Rewriter Tool or other text spinning tools which intentionally seek to alter original text and generate new content to avoid plagiarism detection.

Resource Office and in classes when assignments are set and discussed. This will include explaining and demonstrating the method of attributing sources required by the College on different programmes. When submitting assignments for assessment, learners are required include a cover sheet on which they confirm that the work presented is their own work, that they have read the *Carlow College Academic Integrity and Plagiarism Policy* and have attended a workshop on academic integrity.

Learners at Carlow College are required to submit work through a text-matching software system called Turnitin. This software allows learners to view Originality Reports which match the similarity of the submitted work to a wide range of sources. If sources have been correctly paraphrased and referenced, this is not a problem. If sources have not been referenced correctly, the learner has an opportunity to amend their work and submit it again. Turnitin reports can also be used by assessors to detect plagiarism (see Appendix 2). No specific college-wide similarity limit has been set. Each lecturer assesses whether the level of similarity recorded breaches a threshold for plagiarism relevant to the specific assignment (see Appendix 3).

Turnitin also provides an AI detection tool to assessors, which gives an overall percentage of content detected as likely determined to be generated by AI. This AI detection tool is not currently available to students in advance of submission.

The College recognises that there are different levels of plagiarism and that account must be taken of misunderstanding by learners of the correct conventions of referencing at the start of the degree programmes. Therefore, plagiarism is categorised as minor, moderate and serious and penalties are applied according to the category (Appendix 2). Repeated incidents of plagiarism are serious, as is the purchasing of work (contract cheating) or the use of generative artificial intelligence. In order to protect the integrity of our progression and award processes, the College will apply academic sanctions, including a reduced or fail grade, and will invoke the Learner Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Policy in the case of repeated serious plagiarism. A Plagiarism Report Form must be submitted to the Office of the Registrar in all cases where plagiarism is detected, even if it is in the minor category.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

The Office of the Registrar holds responsibility for all matters, including Quality Assurance, in relation to academic integrity. In this role, the Office is supported by the Assistant Registrar, Programme Directors, Academic Advisors, Academic Resource Office, lecturing staff and external examiners across all programmes.

6. Associated Documentation

- Appendix 1: Promoting and Supporting Academic Integrity
- Appendix 2: Procedures for Detecting and Dealing with Plagiarism
- Appendix 2.1: Cover Sheet for assessments
- Appendix 2.2: Cover Sheet for take-home exams
- Appendix 2.3: Plagiarism Report Form
- Appendix 2.4: Guidelines for Using *Turnitin* at Carlow College, St. Patrick's

7. Referenced Policies

- *Assessment of Learners Policy*
- *Learner Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Policy*

8. Monitoring and Review

The Policy will be subject to continuous assessment and evaluation. Staff and learners will receive refresher training at regular intervals. The Policy will be formally monitored on an annual basis by the Office of the Registrar and formally reviewed every five years.

Appendix 1: Promoting and Supporting Academic Integrity

Promoting and Supporting Academic Integrity

Adopting a whole-of institution approach, Carlow College aims to provide an environment where academic integrity considerations are incorporated into planning and practices by staff and learners. This includes programme documentation, assessment design and implementation, pedagogical approaches and supports for learners. To achieve this, it is essential that all members of the College understand what is meant by academic integrity and what constitutes academic misconduct.

Staff[55]

The Office of the Registrar and Programme Directors must ensure that all lecturers are familiar with the location and contents of the *Academic Integrity and Plagiarism Policy* and related procedures and processes.

Lecturers should model good referencing practices in PowerPoint slides, lecture notes and other resources provided to learners.

Training and guidelines are provided to staff on developing assessment methods which are appropriate and less susceptible to cheating practices.

Programme Directors and lecturers will manage and monitor assessment schedules to minimise learner stress

Lecturers will place links to policies and guidelines on Academic Integrity on their Moodle pages and discuss these procedures with learners as they are prepared for assessments.

Lecturers will set up Test Turnitin links for continuous assessments to allow learners to submit and see their similarity reports before final submission.

Learners

In order to prevent unintentional plagiarism and to educate on the severity of intentional academic misconduct, learners will be fully informed about Academic Integrity and the consequences of Academic Misconduct. This will include but is not limited to the following:

Learners across all stages will attend mandatory 'Academic Integrity' workshops as part of induction week. Attendance will be noted and those who do not attend will be contacted and required to attend an additional workshop.

Learners across all stages will be invited to attend the Writing Development Workshop Series which provides two annual workshops dealing specifically with academic integrity. These workshops will be mandatory for any learner whose work has been found to contain minor or moderate evidence of plagiarism.

Copies of the Carlow College *Academic Integrity and Plagiarism Policy* and the Student

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[5] This section is informed by NAIN, Academic Integrity Guidelines, p. 19.

Guide to Academic Integrity and Avoiding Plagiarism will be made accessible to learners on multiple platforms.

All submitted work must include a cover sheet on which the learner confirms that the work presented is their own work, that they have read the Carlow College *Academic Integrity and Plagiarism Policy* and have attended a workshop on academic integrity.

Appendix 2: Procedures for Detecting and Dealing with Plagiarism

Detecting Plagiarism

The assessor should carefully consider the evidence of plagiarism while correcting an assessment. Indicators and/or proof of plagiarism may include, but are not limited to one or more of the following:

- The identification of similarities by Turnitin which extends beyond similarities relating to references/bibliography and direct attributed quotations. The Turnitin similarity report should always be checked. While similarity scores in the 'high' range may indicate plagiarism, this is not invariable and scores in the 'low' range may in turn identify plagiarised sections (See *Guidelines for use of Turnitin* below).

- The detection by Turnitin of material generated by AI.

- Identification of the source of the materials used by the learner without proper attribution, or represented as the learner's own work;

- A demonstrably marked difference in the writing style of the learner, as compared to previous work or within the one assignment. Clear visual disparities with the submitted work: variations in font (style, colour, size), grammar and spelling from section to section; evidence of hyperlinks within the body of an essay.

- Written testimony from others regarding a learner's use of academically dishonest means to complete the assignment;

- First hand observation of the learner engaging in plagiarism;

- An unusual or suspicious degree of similarity in work submitted by different learners;

- Admission by the learner that they have plagiarised.

Where an assessor suspects that the work may not be the learner's own work, even though Turnitin has not matched it to any other source, they may contact the learner and attempt to ascertain by discussion with the learner if they are the author of the assessment. In the case of suspected use of AI the assessor may similarly require the learner to defend their work (oral defence).

Dealing with Plagiarism

It is acknowledged that cases of plagiarism are rarely the same and some are far more serious than others. Seriousness varies according to the learner and the assignment. First year undergraduate learners are arguably still learning what academic integrity means but as they progress, learners are accountable to the highest standards of scholarship. Seriousness also involves the intent to deceive or not. Plagiarism is categorised as minor, moderate and serious and the penalties vary according to the category. When plagiarism has been detected in a piece of written work, the assessor must ascertain if the learner in question has previously been placed on the Plagiarism Register as this has a bearing on the categorization of the plagiarism. They should do this by contacting the Administrator of the Office of the Registrar.

Minor Plagiarism

The following are examples:

a) A piece of work submitted by a Stage 1 learner which is poorly referenced or in which material from a secondary source has been badly paraphrased. The learner has not grasped the norms and conventions of academic work due to inexperience and/or differing cultural assumptions.

b) A piece of work submitted by a learner who does not have a previous plagiarism report which contains a very small amount of plagiarised material (e.g. a couple of sentences in a short work or the equivalent of 100 words in a longer piece).

In the case of a), the learner should be contacted and the problem explained. The learner should be required to attend the next Academic Integrity workshop and/or to meet with the Writing Development Tutor to address their referencing. The assessment should be re-submitted for marking. A Plagiarism report should be filled in and sent to the Office of the Registrar.

In the case of b) the learner should be contacted and informed that a penalty of -5marks has been applied and that a plagiarism report has been filled in. The learner should be required to attend the next Academic Integrity workshop.

Moderate plagiarism.

The following are examples:

a) A Stage 2-4 learner who submits work which is poorly referenced and/or contains badly paraphrased material.

b) A learner who has already had a plagiarism report and who subsequently submits work which contains some plagiarised material.

c) Two or more learners who have collaborated in the production of an assessment and who submit work that is similar.

d) In all the above cases the learner must be contacted, informed about the plagiarism and that a Plagiarism report has been filled in, and required to resubmit the assessment with a capping of the grade to a pass. The learner should be required to attend the next Academic Integrity workshop and a plagiarism report must be filled in.

Serious Plagiarism

The following are examples:

a) A learner who has used an essay mill or other contract cheating service and passed the work off as their own.

b) A learner who has obtained an essay submitted by another learner either in their own stage or the stage above and passed the work off as their own.

c) A learner who has used AI (for example ChatGPT) to generate an assessment

d) A learner who has plagiarised on three or more occasions/assessments.

In all the cases above, the learner is deemed to have failed the assessment without chance of resubmission. In the case of assessments with a weighting of 40% or above, this will then mean that the module is failed and must be repeated. A plagiarism report must be filled in and the learner informed of this. Any further offence by the learner will be treated as a 'gross

misconduct' utilising the *Learner Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Policy*.

A letter will be issued by the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Registrar in all cases where a learner is found guilty of serious plagiarism. This will inform the learner of the gravity of the situation and the implications should a further offence occur.

Plagiarism in a Take-Home Exam

Penalties for plagiarism in a take-home exam are slightly different because the option of re-submission is not available.

If a lecturer detects plagiarism in an answer submitted for a take-home exam, they should make an assessment of how extensive the plagiarism is as a proportion of the overall answer and apply sanctions as outlined below:

   a) 10 marks should be deducted when a small amount of plagiarised material is detected (e.g. a couple of sentences or less than 10%[6] of the answer)

   b) The mark should be capped at 40 when a larger amount of plagiarised material is detected (e.g. a whole paragraph or between 10-30% of the answer)

   c) Zero marks should be awarded when a significant amount of plagiarism is detected (e.g. over 30% of the answer)

In all cases, a Plagiarism Report must be filled in. Learners will be informed by the Office of the Registrar when their take-home exams marks have been reduced because of plagiarism. If a subsequent offence occurs, this may be processed as a 'gross misconduct' utilising the *Learner Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Policy*.

Plagiarism in a Proctored Exam

This includes the use of notes, the introduction of a data key when a College laptop is being used for an exam, copying from another candidate or impersonation. Guidelines for dealing with such breaches of exam regulations, including penalties for same, are included in the document *Regulations in Relation to Assessment and Standards*, which is an appendix of the *Assessment Policy*.

Appeals

Appeals by a learner in relation to plagiarism may be made to the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Registrar within two weeks of the application of a sanction. The grounds for appeal may relate to (i) the decision as to whether plagiarism occurred and (ii) the penalty imposed. On receiving an appeal, the Registrar will adjudicate on the matter. The result of the appeal will be conveyed to the learner and the assessor.

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[6] Note that the percentage figures mentioned here bear no relation to the 'similarity score' generated by the Turnitin software. The percentage is calculated by the assessor following a careful analysis of the extent of plagiarised material in the answer. A high 'similarity score' taken on its own is not evidence of plagiarism.

Appendix 2.1: Assignment Cover Sheet

ASSIGNMENT SUBMISSION FORM

For Electronic Submissions only

Assignment must be submitted by 8pm on the allocated date

Please fill in all the information below

Name	
Student Number	
Programme	
Stage	
Assignment Title	
Module Title	
Module Coordinator	
Date submitted	

Authorship Declaration

By ticking the box below and submitting my assignment, I confirm that the work presented here is my own work. I have not copied the writings, work or ideas of any other student or individual, except where appropriately referenced in the body of the assignment.

☐

By ticking the box below I confirm that I have read and understood the Carlow College Academic Integrity and Plagiarism Policy accessed at: I have read and understood the Carlow College Academic Integrity and Plagiarism Policy accessed at: https://carlowcollege.ie/media/AcademicIntegrityAndPlagiarismPolicy.pdf.

☐

By ticking the box below I confirm that I have attended an Academic Integrity Workshop delivered by the Writing Development Tutor.

☐

Students must keep a copy of all submitted work

Appendix 2.2: Cover Sheet for Take-Home Exams

TAKE HOME EXAM ANSWER BOOKLET
[DATE]

ALL EXAM ANSWERS TO BE SUBMITTED THROUGH TURNITIN WITHIN 24 HOURS* AFTER THE RELEASE OF THE EXAM PAPER.

Please complete all the information below.

Name	
Student Number	
Programme	
Stage	
Exam Module Title	
Date of Exam	
Date submitted	

Authorship Declaration

I have not copied the writings, work or ideas of any other student or individual, except where appropriately referenced in the body of the assignment.

I have read and understood the Carlow College *Academic Integrity and Plagiarism Policy* accessed at: https://carlowcollege.ie/media/AcademicIntegrityAndPlagiarismPolicy.pdf

I have attended an Academic Integrity Workshop delivered by the Writing DevelopmentTutor
☐

Please place a tick or an X in this box

*Students who have additional time as a reasonable accommodation shouldsubmit within 28 hours of the release of the paper.

Appendix 2.3: Plagiarism Report Form

Plagiarism Report Form

Directions:

This form should be completed in all cases where a lecturer has detected plagiarism, even minor plagiarism.

Once completed, it should be emailed to: officeoftheregistrar@carlowcollege.ie

Form:

Name of Learner	
Stage	
Programme	
Academic Advisor	
Name of Lecturer	
Name of Module	
Assignment type and title	
Category of Plagiarism (*please tick as appropriate*)	Minor ☐ Moderate ☐ Serious ☐
Summary of the type and quantity ofplagiarised material detected	
Penalty imposed	
Date	

Appendix 2.4: Guidelines for Using Turnitin at Carlow College

Guidelines for Using *Turnitin* at Carlow College

Learners

Most written assignments are required to be submitted through *Turnitin*. Assignments are submitted through the *Turnitin* link set up on the relevant module's Moodle page. Learners who are enrolled on a module are able to access the link. The lecturer will set up a 'test link' and a 'final submission' link. Assignments must be submitted through the final submission link before the assignment deadline.

Learners are given the opportunity to make a test submission before the assignment's deadline. This submission will generate an *Originality Report*. This is the result of the comparison between the submitted work and open websites on the internet as well as *Turnitin*'s own database of previously submitted papers. The percentage of matched material is represented by a 'score' between 1 and 100.

The similarity score does not tell the learner if an essay is plagiarised, it just records how much is matching to published material. **There is no correct score**. A high score does not necessarily indicate plagiarism. It may indicate an overly high level of quotations from primary or secondary sources. This might be bad essay writing practice but if the material is correctly referenced, there is no issue of plagiarism. A low score, on the other hand, does not mean there has not been plagiarism. If an assignment scores 10%, but that 10% is unreferenced material, then it means that 10% of the assignment has been plagiarised, and that is clearly problematic.

Following the test submission, learners have the opportunity to look at their *Originality Reports* and make changes to the assignment if they wish. Changing the essay solely in order to lower the score is counter-productive and misses the point of *Turnitin*. Learners should concentrate on developing good academic referencing skills and honing their ability to use their own voice in their written work.

Turnitin also provides an AI detection tool to assessors, which gives an overall percentage of content determined to be generated by AI. This AI detection tool is not available to students in advance of submission.

Lecturers

Lecturers should set up the *Turnitin* links on their relevant Moodle page in good time, preferably at least four weeks before the assignment is due. A 'test link' should be set up which allows learners to see *Originality Reports* and a 'final submission link' which also allows learners to see *Originality Reports*. Assignments submitted through the 'final submission link' are the ones to be graded. Lecturers are encouraged to use settings which exclude quotations, bibliography and small matches such as common phrases.

Lecturers should avoid giving learners the impression that there is a 'threshold' for the similarity score above which assignments will be considered to be 'plagiarised'. It is more helpful to give learners examples of good quotation and referencing techniques.

Turnitin can assist in the detection of plagiarism as it is faster and more effective than investigating for the original sources through conventional search engines (i.e. Google). However, the lecturer must use their own judgement in determining whether a learner has plagiarised material in their assignment.